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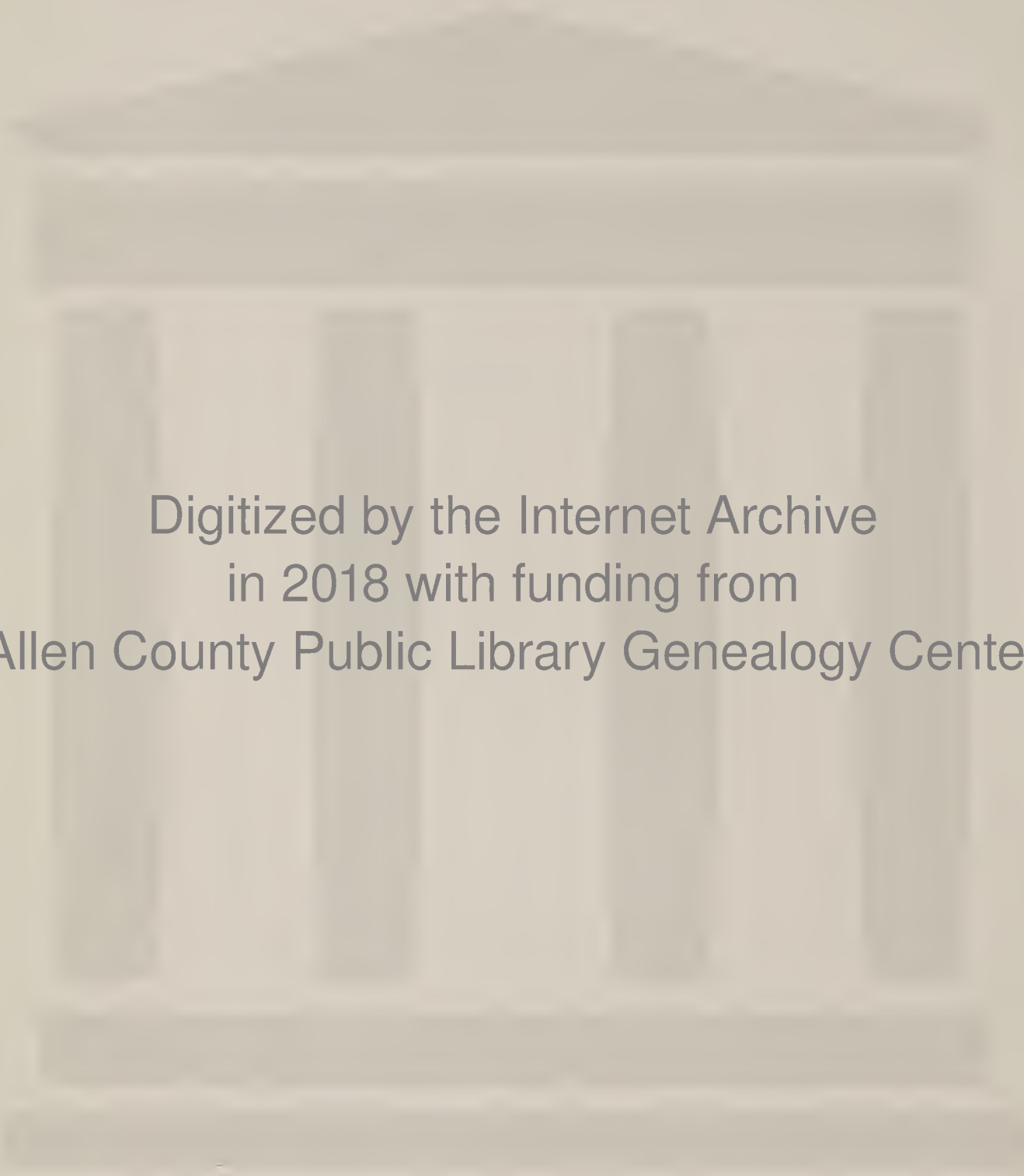
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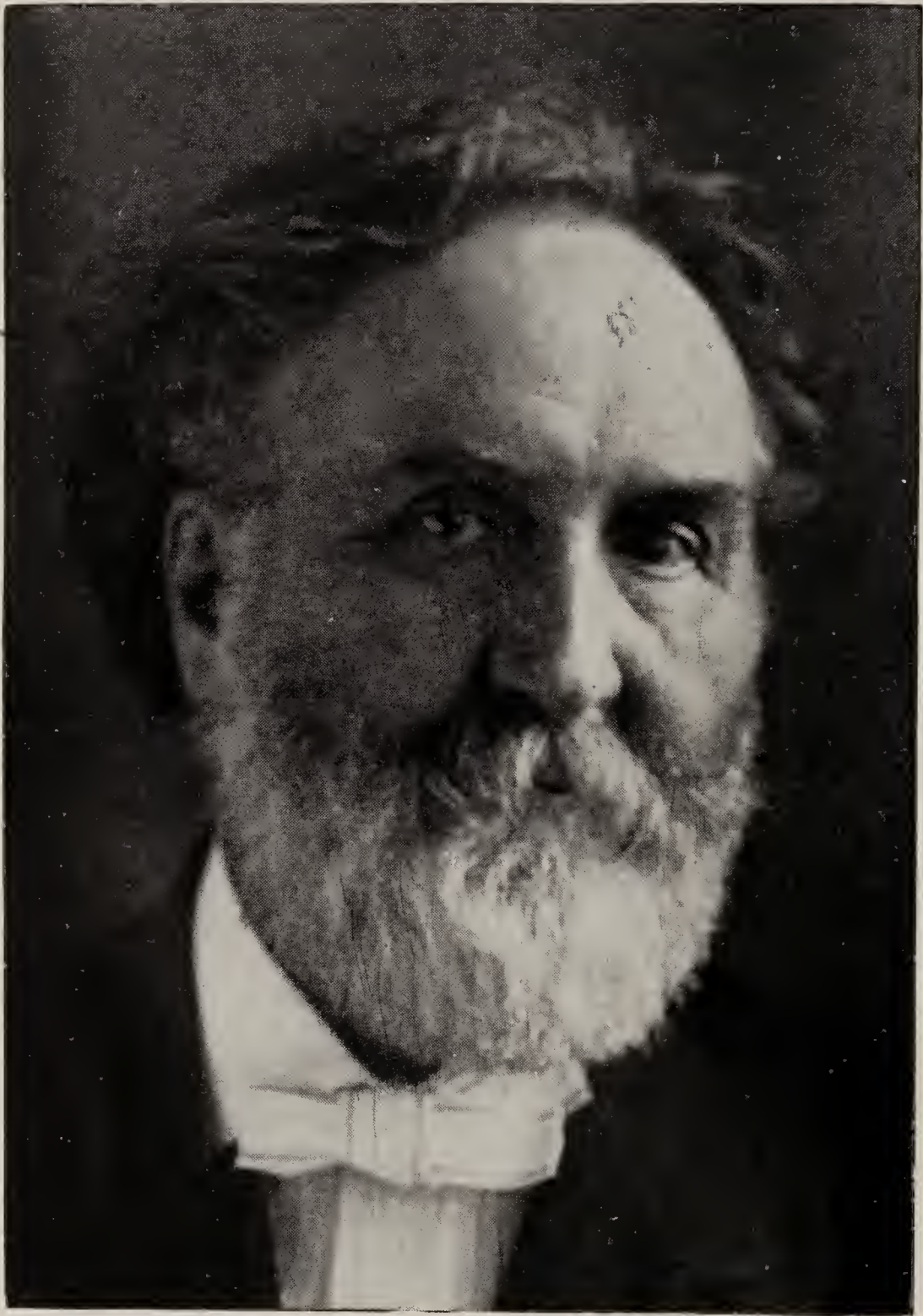
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ERNEST B. FISHER

GRAND RAPIDS  
*and*  
KENT COUNTY  
MICHIGAN

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THEIR PROGRESS  
FROM FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT  
TIME

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ERNEST B. FISHER, EDITOR

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*IN TWO VOLUMES*

*VOL. I*

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CHICAGO:  
ROBERT O. LAW COMPANY  
1918

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## Preface

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After more than a year of continuous and painstaking effort on the part of a considerable corps of workers, the publishers of these volumes on Kent County and Grand Rapids, present them to those for whom they were prepared in the belief that they will be found more than was promised. In their preparation accuracy has been kept more in mind than ornate diction. It was not intended to go into all the stories and traditions which hang about the dawn of white settlement in the Grand River Valley, but it was rather the plan to supplement former publications so that a searcher in the archives might find their story consistently connected down to the present year.

In collaboration with Mr. Ernest B. Fisher, who has acted as our guide and mentor in all this work, we feel that a worthy and reliable result has been achieved. His long residence in Grand Rapids and his activities in many public affairs have qualified him for editor in all things relating to the last half century in this thriving metropolis of Western Michigan.

And in addition we have had the assistance of an excellent corps of advisory editors, each selected because of his knowledge of the subject matter dwelt upon in the department given over to his supervision. The chapter devoted to the "Furniture Industry" was contributed by Mr. William Widdicomb, who has spent a more than ordinarily active life in that important branch of the Valley City's activities, and we feel that a better selection could not have been made. Clay H. Hollister has literally "grown up" in the banking business and there is perhaps no man in Michigan more familiar than he is with the history of financial affairs in general and of Grand Rapids in particular. Mr. Hollister acted as our advisory editor for the chapter on "Banking and Finance." Wilder D. Stevens, of the firm of Foster, Stevens & Company, gave us the benefit of his long experience in the mercantile life of Grand Rapids by reviewing the chapter on "Retail Industry," and Jacob Kleinhans and Eugene Boise performed similar service, respectively, on the chapters, "Courts and Lawyers" and the "Medical Profession." The high standing of these men in their professions is a guarantee of the excellence of any work they undertake.

THE PUBLISHERS.

Bookman .75

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## Index—Volume II

All Biographical Sketches in Volume II are arranged in alphabetical order.







# History of Grand Rapids and Kent County, Michigan

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## CHAPTER I. PRE-HISTORIC

### REMAINS OF A YOUNG WOMAN—MOUND-BUILDERS—RELICS OF THE EXTINCT RACE—GEOLOGY.

Resting in a glass case in the rooms of the Public Museum of Grand Rapids are the remains of a young woman. They were found buried deep in the sands of a hillside in Grattan township and scientists tell us that, in life, this was the body of one of the ancient and long forgotten race, which, for want of a better name, we call the Mound Builders. It is not a pleasant sight—bones, broken and yellow with great age, wisps of long black hair, bits of dessicated flesh, and great empty eye-sockets, staring blankly from the remote past. About the arms are broad bands of beaten copper; near the throat were found small copper beads, some still strung together with sinews of the deer. Near the head was found a large sea-shell, such as may now be found along the shores of Florida and the Carolinas. This is all—and yet it tells a wonderful story of a long forgotten race which once thronged the valley of Grand River. The location of the grave, high on the hillside above the rush of waters, shows thought and care; the disposition of the body shows love and reverence and that great hope for immortality which has inspired mankind since the beginning of conscious being. The rude copper bracelets tell of the pride of youth; and more—they tell of knowledge of the mineral wealth of the great northern peninsula, of the ability and the effort to mine the ore, and of the work of loving hands to bring the priceless metal over weary miles and to shape it to fit the slender arms of the beloved. The sinews of the deer speak of the triumphs of the chase and the glad hunter bringing home his spoils, while the careful stringing of the copper beads reveals the deft touch of a woman's hand. The Florida sea-shell, placed so carefully, shows that this was one of the proud possessions of the dead and suggests knowledge of the distant sea and of some means by which this treasure was transported over the mountains and through the forests for many hundreds of miles.

Thus this single grave gives knowledge that ages ago there lived a race, possessed of all the primal passions—grief, love, reverence, belief in immortality, industry, skill, patience, knowledge, travel, endurance, artistry, pride, the ardor of man's love, and the unending affection of a mother's heart. All these are told as plainly to the discerning eye as if sung by Homer or engraved upon the walls of pyramids.

Not only this, but the entire valley of Grand River is strewn with the bones of this ancient race. Whole trenches on the west side of the river were filled with like fragments when the mounds of the old civilization were levelled to make the foundation for the civilization of to-day. And thus hundreds of our happy homes are, literally, built upon the bones of a forgotten people. It is easy, then, for the imagination to reconstruct a picture of the Grand River valley, teeming with a brown-skinned race, busy, happy, industrious, proud of accomplishment and probably (?) quite as sure of the permanency of their civilization as we are that our race shall endure until the end of time.

Scientists are not agreed as to the time of the disappearance of this people. By some it is placed as of as recent a date as 800 years ago, thus making their final disaster contemporary with the beginning of modern England. Others hold that the race became extinct at least 3,000 years ago—more than a thousand years before the beginning of the Christian Era, and centuries before the fabled wolf suckled the founders of ancient Rome. Whether it was war or pestilence, flood or famine which destroyed this people we may not know—but we can but wonder whether it is to be given to some of our loved ones, whom we have laid to rest with love and tears, to reach with dead hands across the centuries and tell some other peoples all they may know of the civilization of which we are now so proud.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” and the Scriptures tell us that he required but six days for the task; but again we are told that in His sight a thousand years are but as a day, and science tells us that many thousands of years were necessary to shape Michigan from the fiery mold of volcanic rock into the splendid habitat of man as we now behold it. It is not the province of history to enter deeply into the field of geology, and it will here suffice to say that in very early geological times the Michigan Basin extended from the Apalachian range along the Atlantic coast, north beyond Lake Superior and west beyond the Mississippi. There were valleys as deeply cut as the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, and mountain peaks but little inferior to the lofty summits of the present Rockies. There were vast upheavals as the molten mass of what is now the earth boiled and bubbled like a witch’s caldron. To the south, a great ridge arose, known to science as the Cincinnati Shale, closing the Michigan Basin and differentiating its formation from that of the states bordering on the Ohio River. This change took place in the early carboniferous age, before the vast forests were developed which later, under immense pressure, became the coal measures with which the Ohio Valley is so richly endowed. The Archean Rocks of the earliest geological times are now seen in the region of Marquette and in the glacial boulders scattered throughout the State, and they were molded in such fiery furnace that no evidence of stratification remains. It was during what is known as the Huronian period that the first sedimentary rock was laid, and the deposit of sediment presupposes a sea. There were also great volcanic disturbances and upheavals, and foldings, and vast streams of lava were belched forth from the fiery interior. Michigan may then have been robbed, in a measure, of its coal by these convulsions of nature, but this Huronian period gave to it its wondrously rich deposits of iron and copper ore. The long centuries of the Cambrian



age gave to Michigan great sand and stone formations and painted the "Pictured Rocks."

There followed a time during which the Niagara limestone was laid, forming, finally, a rim about the great, clear, inland sea. This limestone deposit, about 500 feet in thickness, speaks of the countless years which must have been required for its formation; but this was but an episode in the creation of Michigan, for above the Niagara and within the Michigan Basin, we are told that there are some twenty-six different rock formations of an aggregate thickness of about 4,500 feet. The Salina formation, which immediately followed the Niagara, was at a time when the well springs of the earth were dry and the hot winds like furnace blasts caused the deposit of much salt and gypsum, although the great plaster deposits of the Grand River Valley are outcroppings from the lower carboniferous formations. All these formations were laid prior to the great floods of ice which slowly forced their way from the far north, filled the contours of the basins shaped in former ages, melted and receded, and advanced, again and again. It is not difficult to measure the movement of the comparatively miniature glaciers on the steep mountain sides of today. The advance is but a few feet in a year and furnishes, perhaps, a basis for computation of the length of time covered by the glacial period. The work of these glaciers was to give the finishing touches to the contour of Michigan, to deposit its soil of rare fertility, and to leave us the precious legacy of the Great Lakes.

Again, it is estimated that the close of this glacial period was not less than 50,000 years ago. Of this glacial period Prof. L. H. Wood says in his geography of Michigan: "The events of the Glacial Period so completely effaced the records of the past in Michigan that it became as if old things had passed away and all things had become new. The ice changed the great river valleys to Great Lakes, reduced the range of relief of the Michigan area, chiefly by filling valleys, some 600 feet; filled the old valleys and united the uplands into a compact and definitely bounded area. The elder pre-glacial valleys that would have furnished the habitable space were dammed up, and the life that might have spread over 95,000 square miles of the Great Lakes area was compelled to concentrate either on the peninsulas between the lakes or on their periphery. Water boundaries were thus established that unite much more closely in trade the 30,000,000 people about the lakes than they could possibly have been united by the old upland-valley bed-rock surface of the state. The new lines of the relief have determined the location of the railroads, sites were established for all the cities of the state, the soils were redistributed, and the relations to the outside world so changed that a new distribution was determined for all the future industries; and in general all the geographic lines of development of the state radiate from the new epoch inaugurated with the Glacial Period."

The sign writing of the Glacial Period is found in the tracings of erosion on many rocks; and the soil of Michigan, practically all of it, is the result of the work of these great ice rivers. The recession of the glaciers left large bodies of water in the deep valleys formed in prior ages, but with the western lakes emptying into the ocean by way of the Mississippi Valley. Still further recessions opened other out-



lets and the receding waters were cut off from the gateway to the Mississippi and found an outlet through the St. Lawrence River. The Great Lakes are then a direct legacy from the glaciers, a priceless legacy to commerce and to the salubrity of Michigan's climate. Grand River so named because it is the largest in the State, and the largest river emptying into the Great Lakes, is believed also to be a direct gift of the Glacial Period and to have been for a long time the outlet of Lake Saginaw and other glacial lakes, and to have been one with the Kalamazoo and St. Joseph rivers, later finding its own outlet from Grand Rapids to Lake Michigan. Nothing can be more fascinating than this wonderful story of the earth's development, as pieced together by the trained minds of scientists from the evidence of rocks and soils and fossil remains, which latter tell of the many strange forms of animal life which teemed in pre-historic lakes and roamed through pre-historic forests. Aside from these "sermons in stones," the page of history is a blank for all these 50,000 years and the silence of the ages is first broken by the evidence of human life left to us for study by the Mound Builders.

The traces of the Mound Builders are found at many points throughout the United States and especially in the Ohio and Scioto Valleys and throughout this western section of Michigan. Mounds recently excavated on the farm of Senator Tremper, of Portsmouth, Ohio, yielded rich treasures because the work was directed with intelligence. The mounds of the Grand River region were opened largely under less favorable conditions, thus preventing extended, careful scientific study of the structure of the mounds and which also resulted in the loss and destruction of many relics of this unknown race. The Public Museum of Grand Rapids contains, however, a very interesting collection, among which are many articles which show a much higher order of intelligence; patience and skill, as well as of artistic ability, than was shown by any of the Indians, then living in the United States who first came into contact with the whites. Speaking of the Mound Builders and their work in Michigan, Henry H. Riley, of Constantine, said in a paper read before the Pioneer Association, in 1879: "My belief in the existence of the so-called Mound Builders of our continent increases from year to year. There is a witchery about the subject that inflames the imagination and warps the judgment. I never look upon the remains of a people which stand so silently and so solemnly around us—what people I do not know—without feeling myself stretching away into the past, with my head in a whirl, and my brain exhausting itself among the phantoms of antiquity. The mound builders seem to belong to a race who finished up their work on earth before the real life-work of men and nations began, and who just left their monuments behind them when they passed away, to puzzle us with curious investigations and strange questions never, perhaps, to be answered."

Among the relics found in the many mounds are finely wrought implements and ornaments made from the copper which they mined in the Lake Superior region, doubtless by the slow and wearisome process of heating and pouring on water. The evidences of these mines on Isle Royal are very wonderful. There are pits of as much as 30 feet in diameter and with a depth of 60 feet. There are underground passages and drains and at one place, remains of a timbered passage. There were also found in the mounds, implements made of silver, por-

phyry, obsidian and green stone, while the copper has been worked into chisels, axes, bracelets, beads, and toys; and there are many beautiful designs of pottery. The hand which shaped and smoothed and polished some of these specimens, and which formed them in perfect symmetry with the natural markings of the stone, was possessed of both skill and cunning and was guided by a mind which had a high appreciation of the beautiful. Again, there are evidences of intensive agriculture in what are supposed to be well laid-out gardens—gardens of which, it would seem, that our thriftiest truck farmer might well be proud.

Some cities have had wholly artificial origin, while others were ordained by nature as the habitation of man. The Mound Builders showed a high degree of intelligence in the selection of the sites for their centers of population, and their locations at Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Grand Rapids, have been approved and followed by our present civilization. They showed the same appreciation of the value of the Grand River as affording a broad and safe avenue from Lake Michigan to the rich interior as later did the Indians and the whites. They also found that at the portage, made necessary by the rapids to connect with the highway of water extending many additional miles through the forest, was the most suitable place for their residence. That they lived here in great numbers is attested by the many mounds filled with their bones, while the fact that conflict waged for the possession of this favored region is shown by the multiplicity of arrow heads and other implements of war which have been plowed up in many a Kent County field. Is it not possible that once the valley of Grand River ran as red with blood as has the valley of the Marne, and that here was witnessed the final extermination of a race?

The entire absence of Indian tradition concerning the Mound Builders, and the fact that the trunks of trees of great age have been found buried deep above these Mound Builders' graves, and beneath living forests also of great age, indicate that centuries must have elapsed between the last of the mound builders inhabitants of the Grand River Valley, and the first Indian inhabitants. Students of the Indian tribes have presumed that the Tuteloes formed the first known tribe dwelling in this region. By some writers they were said to belong to the Six Nations, and by other writers they are said to have been Dakotans, who were gradually exterminated by the warlike Algonquins and Iroquois. The earlier tribes made free use of the mounds left by the earlier race, both as lookout stations and as places of burial, and held them in great reverence. It is the complication caused by these intrusive burials which has made the work of research so much more difficult for the antiquarian. In truth, the Indians left fewer traces than did the Mound Builders, and their history before the coming of the whites can only be vaguely surmised.



## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY JURISDICTION

FRENCH DOMINIONS—INDIAN INHABITANTS—TITLE TO LANDS—PROVINCE OF CANADA—TREATY OF 1783—VIRGINIA'S CLAIMS OF SOVEREIGNTY—ORDINANCE OF 1787—GREENVILLE TREATY—NORTHWEST TERRITORY—PART OF WAYNE COUNTY—TERRITORY OF MICHIGAN ADMITTED AS A STATE—ORGANIZATION OF KENT COUNTY.

It was not until many years after the close of the American Revolution that the Anglo-Saxon race undertook the project of colonization in the region now known as Grand River Valley, of which Kent County is a component, and as regards population and resources, a very important division. It should not be inferred, however, that the territory contained within the present limits of the county remained unvisited by white men and unknown to them until after the epoch mentioned above. While this portion of North America was under the dominion of the French government, an extensive trade with the Indians was carried on, and in pursuit of the returns that came from the traffic with the red men the wily and skillful French traders traveled extensively over this portion of their mother country's possessions. They continued relations with the natives, notwithstanding that the result of the French and Indian war transferred the right of dominion to the English government, and even for years following the American Revolution they followed their vocation, undisturbed and without competition, save the rivalry existing among themselves. So it is fair to presume that during their many excursions, in quest of trade, the present limits of Kent County were frequently invaded, and as some of their much traveled routes were through this region, it can easily be inferred that the natives who then inhabited this section were the beneficiaries, or victims, as the case might be, of commercial intercourse with the early French traders.

But railroad tracks and plowshares have long since destroyed all vestige of these routes, so often trodden by the once powerful tribes and their eager visitors. These commercial adventurers were not pioneers in the true sense of that word, and it is doubtful if they could properly be called advance agents of civilization. Their mission in these parts was neither to civilize the denizens of the forest nor to carve out homes in the western wilderness. "The white man's burden" rested not heavily upon their shoulders and gave them little or no concern; the only motive that brought them hither being a desire to possess, at as little cost as possible, the wares which the Indians had for sale. This object being attained, they wended their way elsewhere, homeward, and the localities which had known them knew them no more. So it remained for the fore-runners of Anglo-Saxon civilization, as they led the "march of empire" in a westerly direction, to open this section of country for actual settlement and win from hostile nature—and at times a more hostile foe in human form—homes for themselves and posterity.



The Indians who inhabited the northern region east of the Mississippi at the beginning of historic times were, in language, of two great families, to which have been given the French names—Algonquin and Iroquois. These are not Indian names. In fact, from the word Indian itself which is a misnomer—arising from the slowness of the early voyagers to admit that they had found unknown western continents, instead of the Old World India—down to the names of the tribes, there is a confusion of nomenclature and often a deplorable misfit in the titles now fixed in history by long usage. The Algonquin family may more properly be termed the Lenape, and the Iroquois the Mengwe, which the English frontiersmen closely approached in the word Mingo. The Lenape themselves, while using that name, also employed the more generic title of Wapanackki. The Iroquois, on their part, had the ancient name of Onque Honwe, and this in their tongue, as Lenape in that of the other family, signified men with a sense of importance—“*The People*,” to use a convenient English expression. The Lenape became a very widespread people, and different divisions of them were known in later years by various names, among which was Ottawa, the name of the division of the tribe that chiefly inhabited the present limits of Kent County.

Before proceeding with an account of the organization and settlement of Kent County a brief review of the question of title to lands seems to be necessary, the word title as here used having special reference to racial dominion or civil jurisdiction. As is well known, the French were the first civilized people who laid claim to the territory now embraced within the state of Michigan and France exercised nominal lordship over the region until the treaty of Paris, in 1763, which treaty ended the French and Indian war. Prior to this date the French actually occupied isolated places in the vast extent of territory claimed by them (the south shore of Lake Erie, for instance), but it is an open historical question when such occupancy began. It is certain, however, that there was not the semblance of courts or magistrates for the trial of civil or criminal issues, and hence the chief function of civil government was lacking. And even for some years after the Michigan country passed under the control of the officials of the British government, affairs here were managed by army officers, commandants of posts on the frontier.

Immediately after the peace of 1763 with the French, the Province of Canada was extended by act of Parliament, southerly to the Allegheny and Ohio rivers, and westward from the Detroit river. This, of course, included all of the present state of Michigan, notwithstanding the claims of the colony of Virginia that she had the title to all land northwest of the Ohio river. This conflict of authority was at its height during the Revolutionary war, and in 1778, soon after the conquest of the British forts on the Mississippi and the Wabash, by Gen. George Rogers Clark, Virginia erected the county of Illinois, with the county seat at Kaskaskia. It practically embraced all the territory in the present states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. But the British held possession of the Michigan country and all the lake region, and in the same year (1778), Lord Dorchester, Governor General of Canada, divided Upper Canada into four districts for civil purposes, one of which included Detroit and the lake territory.



Great Britain had promised the Indian tribes that the whites should not settle north of the Ohio river, and the government of this almost unlimited region was, during English control, exclusively military, with Detroit as the central post. This was the condition during the Revolutionary war, and even after the treaty of peace, in 1783, the same state of affairs continued until after the second, or Jay treaty, in 1794. Early in 1792 the Upper Canadian Parliament authorized Governor Simcoe to lay off nineteen counties to embrace that province, and it is presumed that the County of Essex, on the east bank of Detroit river, included Michigan and northern Ohio. While this supposition is not conclusive, certain it is that some form of British civil authority existed at their forts and settlements until Detroit was formally and finally given up with all its dependencies in August, 1796.

The treaty of 1783, which terminated the War of the Revolution, included Michigan within the boundaries of the United States, and the Seventh article of that treaty stated that the King of Great Britain would, "with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction or carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, withdraw all his armies, garrisons and fleets from the United States, and from every part, place and harbor within the same, leaving in all fortifications the American artillery that may be therein, and shall order and cause all archives, records, deeds and papers belonging to any of the said states or their citizens, which in the course of the war may have fallen into the hands of his officers, to be forthwith restored and delivered to the proper states and persons to whom they belong." By a subsequent article it was stipulated that five months should be the utmost term for the validity of hostile acts. The final treaty of September, 1783, reaffirmed all these articles as of the preceding date. By the terms of this treaty the international boundary line between the possessions of Great Britain and those of the United States ran through the middle of Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron, and their connecting water-ways, and through Lake Superior to the northward of Isle Royale and thence by the grand portage to the Lake of the Woods, embracing so far as the Northwest is concerned, the entire region to the eastward of the Mississippi river. The maps which accompanied this treaty left no doubt that the whole of Michigan, as at present constituted, was within the United States. Military posts were garrisoned, however, by British troops, and continued under the dominion of Great Britain for many years after that date. The British forces showed no inclination to vacate the fort at Detroit, and General Washington sent a messenger to Governor Haldimand to establish a date for the actual surrender of the western posts. Haldimand wrote in a respectful tone to the effect that he could not consider the matter of vacating these posts in the absence of positive orders from his majesty. Preparatory to taking possession of the country, and in order to avoid collision with the Indian tribes, who owned the soil, treaties were made with them from time to time (of which more is said on a subsequent page), in which they ceded to the United States their title to their lands. But the territory thus secured by treaties with Great Britain, and with the Indian tribes—and concerning which we had thus established an amicable understanding—was many years sequestered from our possession. In spite of the claim by Congress for the actual



possession of the western country, in spite of the agitation on the part of officials of our government for the carrying out of the treaties in good faith, the British government took no action whatever. Governor Haldimand shielded himself behind his lack of instructions, and so matters remained for years in this unsatisfactory condition.

There seems to be some ground for belief that this was a deliberate policy, founded upon the expectation or hope that something might turn up in the interest of Great Britain through which that government could continue its occupancy indefinitely. It is known that Washington harbored some such idea. There were still opportunities for complications in this state of affairs as between the two countries. No one could foresee what questions might arise or whither the course of events might lead. There were plenty of emissaries of Great Britain working among the Indian tribes, seeking to hold or attach them to British interests and to enlarge a naturally unfriendly feeling against Americans. This very feeling of the Indians was offered as a pretext for maintaining an armed force in the country. It was argued that the safety of the whites could only be assured by the presence of a strong military guard. This the United States had not undertaken to supply. Hence, it devolved upon Great Britain to preserve the peace. In view of the known efforts to foment Indian hostility this argument was transparently deceptive. There were evidences of intrigues on the part of Great Britain in dealing with her former Indian allies, who had suffered severe losses and who felt that they had not been adequately rewarded for all their sacrifices. So the Indian question cut a considerable figure in the determination of Governor Haldimand to hang on to the western posts as long as possible.

The British government urged as a further excuse the failure of Americans to fulfill that part of the treaty protecting the claims of British subjects against citizens of the United States, but, from the "aid and comfort" rendered the Indians in the campaigns of Harmer, St. Clair, and Wayne, the apparent prime cause was to defeat the efforts of the United States to extend their power over the country and tribes north of the Ohio, and continue to give the British the advantage of the fur trade, which, from their earlier relations with these tribes, they had possessed and wished to retain. This trade had been of immense value to England. She could not see these profits slip from her traders without a struggle to save them. The region included within the new boundaries of the United States had been the most profitable source of supply. In 1786 a council of Indian nations northwest of the Ohio river was held at the Huron village near the mouth of the Detroit river. This was attended by representatives of all the leading tribes. They were troubled about the boundary between their possessions and those of the United States. They maintained that the Ohio was not to be crossed by the Americans. They also insisted that their rights had not been properly considered in the treaty between the United States and Great Britain. It seemed to be the feeling of the savages that the United States had neglected to show the attention to their wishes which the same demanded. A grand council was held at Fort Harmer, Marietta, in 1787, which formulated a treaty tending to settle in a satisfactory manner the points in controversy. The ultimate result of the complaints of the Indians and the international difficulty with England



induced and led to the campaigns of 1790-91-94, ostensibly against the Indians, but substantially against them and their British allies. Matters in controversy with the Indians were finally and definitely disposed of at Greenville, in the present state of Ohio, in 1795, when by treaty the title to large tracts of lands included in Michigan was confirmed to the United States.

Virginia, however, while still adhering to her claim of sovereignty over the northwestern country, on March 1, 1784, ceded the territory to the United States, and immediately Congress entered seriously upon the consideration of the problem of providing a government for the vast domain. Its deliberations resulted in the famous "Compact of 1787," and under this organization Gen. Arthur St. Clair was appointed governor. It might not be out of place here to call attention to the fact that this compact, in two provisions, which were inspired by Thomas Jefferson, guaranteed to all the right of religious freedom and prohibited slavery in the territory. Hence the citizens of Kent County, in common with the citizens of Michigan, and those of the sister states that were carved from Virginia's grant, can feel a pardonable pride that never, under any American jurisdiction of this domain, has a witch been burned at the stake, or a slave been sold on the auction block. It should be understood, however, that slavery had always existed under the French regime in Canada or New France, to which Michigan also had belonged. Nor did it cease under British rule, for as late as 1782 the commandant at Detroit, Major Arent Schuyler De Peyster, caused an enumeration to be made of the people and property of Detroit, and in the "survey" are found these two items: "Male slaves, 78; female slaves, 101." It appears that Indians as well as negroes were held in slavery in spite of the Ordinance of 1787, which totally prohibited it. There is a tradition that even as late as the coming of John T. Mason, as secretary of the territory in 1831, he brought some domestic slaves with him from Virginia, and it is not improbable that a few domestic servants continued with the old masters down to the time of the adoption of the State Constitution. As late as 1807 Judge Woodward refused to free a negro man and woman on a writ of habeas corpus, holding in effect that as they had been slaves at the time of the surrender, in 1796, there was something in Jay's treaty that forbade their release. But it is proper to say that after the Ordinance of 1787 took effect there was no legal slavery in Michigan.

Though Michigan was included within the provisions of the Ordinance of 1787, they could not at once be practically applied owing to the fact that the country was still under British control. In 1792 Quebec was divided into Upper and Lower Canada, with the seat of government of the latter at Toronto, then known as York. Sir Guy Carleton, as Lord Dorchester, had again become Governor General of the whole province, with John Graves Simcoe Lieutenant-Governor, of Upper Canada. The Quebec act, so far as related to this region, was repealed and all legislation under it was abrogated. Permanent courts were established in the regular way and a form of civil government was set up for the first time at Detroit and Michilimackinac.

To encourage the Indians in self-defense and incidentally as a protection to Detroit, Simcoe built a fort at the rapids of the Maumee and garrisoned it with British soldiers. He was evidently persuaded,



even so late as 1794, as was apparently Governor Carleton also, that the prospects were favorable for Great Britain to continue holding the country. But in that very year their hopes must have been blasted, for Jay's treaty, made in September, 1794, stipulated that all the western posts within the territory belonging to the United States should be surrendered by June 1, 1796. In spite of this, however, some of the local representatives of British occupation still sought to postpone the inevitable through Indian hostility which they lent their efforts to promote. While there were some disaffected savages ready to take up arms in behalf of British interests, the councils were divided. Nevertheless, there were troubles of a sufficiently serious character to call for the energetic efforts of Gen. Anthony Wayne, and a considerable army. Several bloody engagements took place, in which militia and volunteers from Detroit participated, one of them almost under the gates of the British fort on the Maumee. When the news of Jay's treaty came some of the natives were shrewd enough to see that with a definite date set for the surrender of the country there was small prospect of annulling a solemn treaty made and confirmed by the government of the United States and Great Britain, and they were ready to agree to a permanent peace. Then followed the treaty of Greenville, as already stated, and the end of hostilities.

The ratifications of Jay's treaty having been exchanged, a messenger was at once despatched to Lord Dorchester at Quebec, with a demand that its provisions be carried into effect. This time there was no hesitancy in acceding to the demand. The necessary orders for the evacuation of the western posts were issued, and upon the return to Philadelphia of the messenger they were at once put into the hands of General Wayne. They were duly forwarded by him to Lieut.-Col. John Francis Hamtramck, at Fort Miami, to be carried into effect. He despatched Capt. Moses Porter with sixty-five men fully armed and equipped to take possession of Detroit. The detachment arrived on July 11, 1796, and on that day Col. Richard England, then in command of the garrison, lowered the British colors from the flag-staff at Fort Lernoult and Captain Porter ran up the Stars and Stripes. Thus, after long and vexatious delays, the sovereignty of the United States was established over Michigan. Colonel Hamtramck, with his entire command, arrived at Detroit two days later and assumed military authority over the post and the town. General Wayne himself came in a few weeks with the powers of a civil commissioner as well as those of a military commander, and remained throughout the summer, busied in getting into operation the governmental machinery. So, for the first time it could be definitely and positively said that Michigan had ceased to be a British province and had attained the dignity of allegiance to the United States.

As has been previously stated, Virginia claimed the whole northwest to the Mississippi under her colonial charter of 1609, which gave her a front on the Atlantic 200 miles north and 200 miles south from Point Comfort, "and all that space and circuit of land lying from the sea-coast of the precinct aforesaid up into the land, throughout from sea to sea, west and northwest." It will be readily seen that under this charter she could claim almost anything between the two oceans, north of Cape Fear river. New York, by virtue of a treaty with the Six



Nations of New York, laid claim to all the country the said Indians had overrun, south to the Cumberland mountains, and west to the Mississippi, but it is very questionable whether Michigan could be brought within her claim, and it never became a practical question. And finally, Massachusetts had a colonial charter extending on the Atlantic border from the Connecticut limit of 42 degrees 2 minutes to a point "three English myles to the northward of said river called Monomack alias Merrymack" and "throughout the mayne landes there from the Atlantic and Western sea and ocean on the east parte to the South Sea on the west parte." This would have carried the projected north line of the Massachusetts claim, if extended due west, to about the north line of Oakland county, or near the latitude of Port Huron and Grand Rapids. The task of the Congress of the Confederation was to unite as many of these claims as possible in the hands of the United States. The first and most important thing to be done was to secure cessions from each of the individual States having claims on the western lands. In doing this aid came in a most unexpected way. It is necessary to premise that, by the "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union," it was provided that the said Articles should not become operative and binding until ratified by each of the thirteen states. On Feb. 22, 1779, Delaware, the twelfth state, ratified, leaving Maryland only yet to ratify in order to complete the Confederation.

Maryland demanded, as the condition of her ratification of the Articles, an amendment giving Congress power to fix the western limits of those states claiming to the Mississippi, and as early as December, 1778, the legislature of Maryland adopted a "Declaration" to the effect that "Maryland will ratify the Confederation when it is so amended as to give full power to Congress to ascertain and fix the western limits of these states claiming to extend to the Mississippi." This document was presented to Congress, Jan. 6, 1779. This was followed by "Instructions to Maryland Delegates," presented May 21, of the same year. The completion of the Confederation hung on the action of Maryland, and she stood fast and refused to ratify unless the desired amendment was made. Virginia adopted a counter declaration, in which she laid down the proposition that "the United States hold no territory but in right of some one individual State of the Union," and further declared that the setting aside of this principle "would end in bloodshed among the states." It would require a very long chapter to give anything like a full history of the long struggle by which New York, Virginia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut were finally led to cede to the United States, as trustees for all the States, the lands which they severally claimed "west of the mountains." But it may be summarized briefly as follows:

New York led the way, by the passage of an Act, Jan. 17, 1780, "For facilitating the completion of the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union among the United States of America," by which her delegates were authorized to limit her western boundaries, and to cede the surplus of her claim to the United States, for the use and benefit of all such states as should become members of the Federal Alliance. On March 1, 1781, the New York delegates executed a deed of cession, of all her territory west of her present west line, on the meridian of the most westerly bend of Lake Ontario. On the same



day the delegates of the State of Maryland ratified and signed the Articles of Confederation, thus completing the Confederation. But already, on Jan. 2, 1781, Virginia had yielded to the pressure of Congress and the non-claimant States and had by act of her legislature resolved to cede the territory northwest of the Ohio river for the common benefit, but she placed this cession on such conditions of acknowledgment of her title to the transmontane lands and of guarantee of her remaining territory, as rendered it impossible for Congress, representing all the States, to accept. But on Oct. 20, 1783, Virginia made a new or amended cession, obviating the most important objections, and on March 1, 1784, her cession was accepted by Congress. On Nov. 13, 1784, the General Court of Massachusetts authorized her delegates to execute cessions of her lands west of the Hudson river. And on April 19, 1785, just ten years after the day when the "embattled farmers" stood on the green in front of the Lexington meeting-house and at Concord bridge, where they "fired the shot heard round the world," Samuel Holton and Rufus King, her delegates in Congress, executed, and on the same day Congress accepted the cession of all her right, title and claim to lands west of the meridian of the westerly bend of Lake Ontario, the same being the west line of New York state.

All these pretensions of sovereignty and confusions of authority were aside from the claims of the real inhabitants of the country. The Iroquois Indians, or Six Nations, laid claim to the entire extent of territory bordering on the Ohio river and northward, basing their contention upon the assumption that they had conquered it and held it by right of conquest. In 1722 a treaty had been made at Albany, N. Y., between the Iroquois and English, by which the lands west of the Allegheny mountains were acknowledged to belong to the Iroquois by reason of their conquests from the Eries, Conoys, Tongarias, etc., but this claim was extinguished by the terms of the treaty of Fort Stanwix, concluded Oct. 22, 1784. Article III of this treaty provided for a line to be drawn four miles east from the carrying path on Lake Ontario, parallel with the Niagara river to Lake Erie and along the north boundary of Pennsylvania, to the west boundary, thence south to the Ohio river. The six nations were to hold to that line, and all west of that line they yielded to the United States. But there were tribes and nations settled on these western lands, who did not admit the right or power of the Six Nations to dispose of the title to their lands. So a separate treaty must be made with them, or the settlers in the Ohio country would experience the horrors of savage warfare on their settlements. The treaty of Fort McIntosh, in 1785, was intended to quiet the claims of the Delawares, Wyandots, Ottawas, and Chippewas, in the Ohio valley. The Shawnees relinquished their claims under the provisions of the treaties of Fort Finney, Jan. 9, 1789, by the treaty of Greenville, and various other treaties from that date until 1818. It is a notable fact that every foot of Michigan soil was acquired from the Indians through treaty or purchase, and, when compared with methods followed in other sections of America, the means employed were decidedly honorable. True, some of these treaties, as for instance, the one concluded at Greenville, were entered into at the close of long and bloody conflict, when the Indians had been conquered



and reduced to a condition of helplessness, thus making them obliged to submit to terms offered by the victors. But when we consider the fact, demonstrated on every page of the world's history, that the tree of civilization does not grow until the soil has been fertilized by human blood, we can condone the warfare waged against the Indians, and by comparison at least point to those treaties as just and merciful ones. Concerning the earlier Indian treaties, Rufus King, in his history of Ohio, says:

"To open the way for surveys and sales of the western lands and to induce immigration, it was essential to obtain the Indian title. A board of commissioners had been established for this purpose in 1784. Instead of seeking peace and friendship through the great council of the northwestern confederacy, which had now transferred its annual meetings from the Scioto to the Rapids of the Maumee (near Toledo), these officials adopted the policy of dealing with the tribes separately. Year after year they treated with sundry gatherings of unauthorized and irresponsible savages, at what are known as the treaties of Fort Stanwix, in October, 1784; Fort McIntosh (mouth of Big Beaver), in January, 1785; Fort Finney (near the mouth of the Big Miami), in January, 1786, and Fort Harmar (mouth of Muskingum), in January, 1789. By these proceedings it was given out and popularly supposed that the Indian tribes on the Ohio had acknowledged the sovereignty of the United States and surrendered all the territory south and east of a line which passed up the Cuyahoga river, and across the portage to the Tuscarawas, then descending this stream to Fort Laurens, thence running west to the portage between the heads of the Big Miami and the Auglaize rivers to Lake Erie. Congress was under the delusion that it had acquired the Indian title and full dominion of all the lands between this line and the Ohio river. The mischief of these travesties was soon discovered in new raids and murders perpetrated upon the settlers of the government lands by the very tribes ignorantly reported and supposed to have ceded to territory."

The Greenville treaty was made by Gen. "Mad Anthony" Wayne, on Aug. 3, 1795, at the close of the Indian war waged in the Maumee valley and throughout Ohio and southern Michigan during the years 1790-95. Full particulars of these hostilities are not germane in this connection, but the provisions of the treaty come properly within the scope of the history of Kent county. Between the Cuyahoga and Tuscarawas and the Maumee and Miami, south to the line from Fort Laurens to Laramie's store, the Indians were to retain possession, and besides that were to hold the title to all the rest of the country, west of a line from Fort Recovery to the mouth of the Kentucky river, and west and northwest of the Maumee, except Clark's grant on the Ohio river and certain reservations about Detroit and the forts in Ohio and other parts of the Northwest, with the understanding that when they should sell lands it should be to the United States alone, whose protection the Indians acknowledged, and that of no other power whatever. There was to be free passage along the Maumee, Auglaize, Sandusky, and Wabash rivers, and the lake. Twenty thousand dollars' worth of goods were at once delivered to the Indians, and a promise was made of \$9,500 worth every year forever.

The United States Senate ratified the Wayne and Greenville treaty in due time, and Southern Michigan and Northwestern Ohio, north of



the treaty line and west of the "Connecticut Reserve" line, remained unorganized for a number of years thereafter. About the same time (1794) John Jay, as minister to England, concluded his treaty with that country, by the terms of which the British posts were to be abandoned in the neighborhood of the Great Lakes on or before June 1, 1796. The terms not being strictly complied with, in July, 1796, the United States demanded a fulfillment of the treaty and the transfer of authority was accordingly made, General Wayne moving his headquarters thither and displacing the English commander. In the absence of Gen. Arthur St. Clair, who was the governor of the Northwest Territory, Secretary Winthrop Sargent went to Detroit and proclaimed the county of Wayne, which included what is now the lower peninsula of Michigan, a large part of Indiana, and the Indian country in Ohio, the boundary of which on the south was the Greenville treaty line.

It will be well to digress here a moment and turn our attention to some events, which, though they left no permanent results, but for a miscarriage might have very deeply affected the subsequent history of what is now Kent county and the state of Michigan in general. There is an impression that there has been some "landgrabbing" in recent years, participated in by men in high official positions, including several members of Congress, but compared with some of the great land "deals" in the first two decades after the treaty of peace with Great Britain, these were very tame affairs. The legislature of Georgia in 1794 had sold to four companies, including some of the most eminent citizens of the country, a vast tract of land lying between the Chattahoochie and the Mississippi rivers, and these speculators had succeeded in selling out at a great advance to other speculators in the Middle and Northern States. It was charged and believed that this action by the legislature of Georgia had been procured by corrupt means, and, stimulated by its success, a scheme was concocted to "gobble up" nearly the entire lower peninsula of Michigan. It was in 1795, while the treaty of Greenville was still pending and England had not yet yielded possession, that one Dr. Robert Randall, of Maryland, visited Detroit for the purpose of interesting certain Detroit merchants and capitalists in no less a scheme than the purchase of all the rights of the United States in 20,000,000 acres of land in the peninsula for the sum of \$500,000. He had associated with him one Whitney, of Vermont, who was looking after New England, while other confederates were "interesting" members of Congress, as members of the Georgia legislature had been "interested" the year before. Among the local people at Detroit who had entered the "combine" were said to be John Askin (merchant and Indian trader), Robert Innis, William Robertson, David Robertson, and Jonathan Shiffelin. The entire capital stock was divided into forty-one shares, of which five were apportioned to the Detroit parties, six to Randall and Whitney and their associates, and thirty were allotted to members of Congress to "influence" them. Overtures had been made to a number of members of Congress—just how many is not known—among them Giles, of Virginia; Smith, of South Carolina; Murray, of Maryland, and others. Randall boasted that he had already "secured" thirty members. But Murray exposed the whole scheme on the floor of the house. Randall was arrested, brought to



the bar of the house, tried for attempted bribery, convicted of high contempt, and sentenced to be reprimanded and held in custody to the end of the session. The exposure was fatal to the whole scheme and this attempted "land-grab"—not the last, be it said—fell flat and came to naught. It might be interesting, but not profitable to speculate what the effect would have been upon the future of Michigan and Kent county had this gigantic scheme succeeded. Among other things the promoters promised that through the influence of their Detroit representatives they would maintain peace and amicable relations with the Indians of the peninsula. For many years the Randall-Whitney attempted bribery and purchase has been a forgotten episode in the region which their ambition and greed would have made a proprietary estate. Most of the resident promoters were British adherents, and it is probable the whole intrigue would have come to naught after actual American occupation.

But meanwhile Michigan remained a part of the as yet undivided Northwest Territory. The proclamation creating the county of Wayne was issued Aug. 15, 1796, and the boundaries named therein were as follows: "Beginning at the mouth of the Cuyahoga river, upon Lake Erie, and with the said river to the portage, between it and the Tuscarawas branch of the Muskingum, thence down the said branch to the forks, at the carrying place above Fort Laurens, thence by a west line to the western boundary of Hamilton county (which is a due north line from the lower Shawanese town upon the Scioto river), thence by a line west-northerly to the southern part of the Portage, between the Miamis of the Ohio and the St. Mary's river, thence by a line also west-northerly to the most southern part of Lake Michigan, thence along the western shores of the same to the northwest part thereof (including the lands upon the streams emptying in the said lake), thence by a due north line to the territorial boundary in Lake Superior, and with the said boundary through Lakes Huron, Sinclair, and Erie, to the mouth of Cuyahoga river, the place of beginning."

From the organization of the territory, in 1788, it had had no representative government, owing to the restrictions of the "Ordinance of 1787." A reference to this "Compact" will discover to the reader that the legislative function of the territorial government in its first stage of development, and until there should be 5,000 free male inhabitants of full age in the district, was lodged in the governor of the territory, and the judges of the general (or Territorial) court, or any two of the judges and the governor. But in 1798, a census was taken, which disclosed more than the necessary "5,000 free male inhabitants" in the Territory, and it thus having reached the second stage of territorial government, entitling it to an elective territorial council, on Oct. 29, 1798, Governor St. Clair accordingly proclaimed an election, to be held on the third Monday of December, for the choice of a house of representatives in the general assembly, to which the territory was entitled at that stage of development. The election was by districts, and Wayne county was entitled to one representative. No election returns are known to be in existence from that part of Wayne county now included in Michigan, but it would seem certain that an election was held at Detroit in December, 1798; if so, it was the first time the elective franchise was ever exercised, under the laws of the United States,



in what is now the Peninsular State. It would appear that James May, of Detroit, was chosen representative. It would seem also that this election was set aside for some reason, a new proclamation of the governor having assigned three delegates to Wayne county. A new election was held at Detroit, Jan. 14 and 15, 1799, at which four candidates were voted for, to-wit: Charles Chabert de Joncaire received 68 votes, Jacob Visger 63 votes, Oliver Wiswell 37 votes, and Louis Beaufait 30 votes. Joncaire, Wiswell, and Visger were declared elected. But there is some confusion and lack of record in regard to this first assembly. Wiswell, though declared elected, did not serve, and Solomon Sibley, though not voted for and not chosen at this election, appears to have served instead. It would seem probable that Wiswell resigned and Solomon Sibley was appointed or elected at a special election in his place, for "on September 28, Solomon Sibley appeared and took his seat." The gentlemen chosen at this election met at Cincinnati on Jan. 22, 1799, and organized the first elective legislative body that ever convened within the limits of the Northwest Territory. Twenty-two representatives were chosen in the nine counties then organized, and they constituted the law-making power of the territory, when taken in conjunction with a legislative council of five members, who were appointed by the United States Congress. This was the first time Michigan was ever represented in any legislative body except an Indian council.

Wayne county (of which the territory now embraced in Kent was then a part), as previously stated, was represented in this assembly by Solomon Sibley, Charles Chabert de Joncaire, and Jacob Visger, all residents of Detroit. The first named, Mr. Sibley, was an exceedingly active and influential member of this assembly and was appointed a committee of one to superintend the printing of the laws of the session. The book as printed is now in possession of the Supreme Court Library in Columbus, Ohio, and in it Mr. Sibley certifies that he has carefully compared the printed laws with the original enrolled bills, and finds them to agree. During the interim between the adjournment of the first and the meeting of the second session of this legislature, Congress passed the act dividing the Northwest Territory and creating the new territory of Indiana.

The first section of the Ordinance of 1787 provided "That the said territory, for the purpose of temporary government, be one district, subject, however, to be divided into two districts, as future circumstances may in the opinion of Congress make expedient." In December, 1789, William Henry Harrison was elected delegate in Congress, and in the following March entered upon his duties, being made chairman of a committee on the division of the Northwest Territory. Through Harrison's influence the committee reported favorably, and on May 7, 1800, the act was approved, making the division. The dividing line followed Wayne's treaty line from a point opposite the mouth of the Kentucky river to Fort Recovery, and thence due north to the international boundary. The region east of this line remained under the title of "The Territory Northwest of the Ohio river," and the region west of the line, including the present limits of Kent county, became a part of the Territory of Indiana; and so remained until June 30, 1805, when the act organizing the Territory of Michigan took



effect. This separation left the region of which Kent county is now a part—though perhaps considered a part of Wayne—practically under no county jurisdiction, but as all the vast territory of Southern Michigan, excepting Detroit and its environs, was as yet the hunting ground of the Aborigines, such a condition of affairs entailed no hardship upon anyone. It must be constantly borne in mind that the Indian title had not yet been extinguished in Michigan, except as to the six-mile strip from the River Raisin to Lake St. Clair, and that even this strip had not been surveyed into lots and brought into market; therefore settlement was confined to the old French grants along the river front, and almost entirely within the six-mile strip. Hildreth, writing of the year 1812, and speaking of Governor Hull's arrival at Detroit, says: "Hull's army reached Detroit, which contained at that time only some 800 inhabitants. The neighboring villages on the strait had about twice as many, the whole Territory of Michigan not much above 5,000, most of them of French origin."

During all this time, following the Greenville treaty, the lands remained in the hands of the Indians with the exception of the small amount of territory heretofore mentioned. In the main, all of Southern Michigan was barren of white inhabitants, and so far as the present site of Kent county is concerned, it was, in the language of the young Fourth of July orator, "a howling wilderness." The Indians and what few whites there were in the vicinity of the reservations had continued to live in comparative peace from and after the ending of hostilities by the Greenville treaty. Even during the troublous times, incident to the War of 1812, when Tecumseh was marshalling the men of his race to assist the British forces, there was but little antagonism between the settlers and natives of the region known as Southern Michigan. Feelings of security were necessarily absent, however, owing to the scenes of war enacted at nearby points, and with the news of the great disaster on River Raisin—where an American force numbering 1,000 was almost annihilated—came a realization of the danger that menaced the settlers. Occasionally, of course, there were outrages that threatened serious trouble, due to lawless elements in both races and the race hatred entertained by many of the whites; yet as a rule the Red Men of the Forest pursued their wild and favorite vocations, undisturbed by naught save what must have begun to be apparent to them—the irresistible and ceaseless onward march of Anglo-Saxon civilization. The end of his dominion in Southern Michigan was rapidly approaching, and in his thoughtful moments the Indian must have heard, reverberating through the air, in tones that a modern policeman would envy, the laconic and authoritative command—"Move On!"

From the year 1807 to 1812 there is little to record in regard to the general growth or progress of the Territory of Michigan, and as far as the lands now contained within the limits of Kent county are concerned it may be said that they remained in statu quo. Two things especially were keeping back the settlement of the territory. First, Michigan was bordered along its entire eastern boundary by Upper Canada, a British province, and liable at any moment to become hostile territory, exposing the whole frontier to invasion by the Indian allies of Great Britain, as well as by British troops, and the war-cloud had



been gathering, more and more portentous, since the opening years of the century. The other cause was the constantly increasing prospect of a new attempt by a confederation of Indians drawn together and led by the Shawanese twins, Tecumseh and his Prophet-brother, Elsquatawa. Tecumseh was an orator of great ability and eloquence, and as a warrior he was noted for his intrepid boldness, undoubted personal courage, and his skill as a strategist. The village of Tecumseh, in Lenawee county, is named in his honor, and to this fact can doubtless be attributed the erroneous idea that Tecumseh, the warrior, was born on Michigan soil. His birthplace was near the present site of the city of Springfield, Ohio. In writing of him the late Hon. Francis A. Dewey falls into the common error concerning his birth, but otherwise pays him a truthful and deserved tribute, as follows: "In my brief outline I do not wish to omit a few words as a passing notice of the renowned chief, Tecumseh. He was born, and over forty years of his life were spent, in the forests of Michigan. His wigwam was on the banks of the River Raisin. Historians say he possessed a noble figure, and his countenance was strikingly expressive of magnanimity, also was distinguished for moral traits far above his race; a warrior in the broadest Indian sense of the word. He disdained the personal adornments of silver brooches, which the tribes so much delighted to wear. In the War of 1812 he joined in the British service, and had in his command over a thousand Indians belonging in Michigan. In General Proctor's division of the Canadian soldiers, Tecumseh held the rank of brigadier-general in the British service. He still adhered to his Indian dress, a deerskin coat with leggings of the same material, being his constant garb. In this he was found dead at the battle of the Thames, Oct. 5, 1813."

The battle of the Thames here referred to practically ended the second war with Great Britain so far as operations in the vicinity of Southern Michigan were concerned, and it broke up, once for all, the northwestern Indian confederation, and gave peace to the region of which the future Kent county was a part. But another obstacle to immigration now arose, which for a number of years thereafter retarded the settlement of the territory. On May 6, 1812, there had been approved an Act of Congress "to provide for designating, surveying, and granting military bounty lands," for the benefit of soldiers who should enlist in the war then about to commence. This act provided for the survey of 6,000,000 acres of military bounty lands, of which 2,000,000 acres were to be located and surveyed in the Territory of Louisiana; 2,000,000 acres in the Territory of Illinois, and 2,000,000 acres in the Territory of Michigan. The act itself described the lands to be surveyed as "lands fit for cultivation." By a subsequent act of Congress, approved April 29, 1816, entitled "An Act to authorize the survey of 2,000,000 acres of public lands in lieu of that quantity heretofore authorized to be surveyed in the Territory of Michigan as Military Bounty Lands," that part of the act of May 6, 1812, which provided for the survey of 2,000,000 acres of said lands in the Territory of Michigan was repealed, and the survey of 1,500,000 additional acres authorized in the Territory of Illinois, and 500,000 acres thereof in the Territory of Missouri. In this latter act, no reason is given for the change in location, but it was based upon an official report of the



surveyor-general of the state of Ohio, Edward Tiffin, who had been entrusted by the commissioner of the General Land Office with the making of an examination of the military bounty lands in the Territory of Michigan. The report is dated at Chillicothe, Ohio, which was then the capital of the state, Nov. 30, 1815, and begins thus:

"Description of the military land in Michigan. The country on the Indian boundary from the mouth of the great Au Glaize river, and running thence for about fifty miles, is (with some few exceptions) low, wet land, with a very thick growth of underbrush, intermixed with very bad marshes, but generally heavily timbered with beech, cottonwood, oak, etc.; thence continuing north and extending from the Indian boundary eastward the number and extent of swamps increases, with the addition of numbers of lakes from twenty chains to two and three miles across." After much more labored and depressing description, he says: "It is with the utmost difficulty that a place can be found over which horses can be conveyed." He concludes this remarkable report as follows: "Taking the country altogether so far as it has been explored, and to all appearances, together with the information received in regard to the balance, it is so bad there would not be more than one acre out of one hundred, if there would be more than one out of one thousand, that would in any case admit of cultivation." As all the military lands were to be "fit for cultivation," of course there was nothing for Congress to do but repeal the act authorizing the location of a part of the lands in the Territory of Michigan, and to re-locate them in the high, dry, and salubrious regions of Missouri. This curious and long-forgotten incident will bring a smile, perhaps of incredulity, to the faces of thousands of people, should it ever meet their eyes, now dwelling on the magnificent farms in Kent county, and they will wonder whether the Ohio surveyor-general ever saw Michigan at all, and whether he did not get lost in the swamps of the great Auglaize or the Maumee. But the report of the surveyor-general had gone to the General Land Office, and thence it had gone to Congress, where it became officially known that "not one acre in one hundred, if there would be more than one out of one thousand" of the land in Michigan was fit for cultivation, insomuch that it was made the basis for the repeal of the act for the location of the bounty lands. The fame of the "great dismal swamp" of Michigan went abroad and it soon turned aside the tide of immigration, which passed by her doors to other and less desirable localities.

In 1818, the Indian title having been extinguished over a large part of the peninsula, and there being some indications of a tendency of immigration thereto, the first land office in the territory was opened at Detroit. This was an epoch, for now, for the first time, settlers could acquire lands outside the old French and British grants along the Detroit river. Another advantageous fact was that many thousands of soldiers—regulars, volunteers, and militia—a great many from Ohio and Kentucky, and others from Pennsylvania, and even from far-away Virginia, had come with Hull and with Harrison, had looked upon the majestic Detroit with its beautiful islands, had noted the farms stretched along the Michigan shore, with their fruitful orchards and white-paled gardens, and had seen the beautiful Raisin with its vine-clad banks, and other streams gliding down from the deep-



wooded interior, hinting of possible water-falls and sites for flouring and saw-mills, and eligible locations for villages and towns. They had gone back with the report that Michigan was not one boundless morass, across which it would be impossible to "convey" a horse, and of which not one acre in a hundred would be "fit for cultivation."

On the admission of Michigan to the Federal Union, the public domain was classified as Congress Lands, so called because they are sold to purchasers by the immediate officers of the general government conformably to such laws as are or may be, from time to time, enacted by Congress. They are all regularly surveyed into townships of six miles square each, under authority and at the expense of the national government. The townships are again subdivided into sections of one mile square, each containing 640 acres, by lines running parallel with the township and range lines. In addition to these divisions, the sections are again subdivided into four equal parts, called the northeast quarter-section, southeast quarter-section, etc. And again, by a law of Congress which went into effect in July, 1820, these quarter-sections are also divided by a north and south line into two equal parts, called the east half quarter-section and west half quarter-section, containing eighty acres each. It was not until after the war of 1812-15, and the conquest of the Indian Territory north of Wayne's treaty line, that surveys were ordered in the territory of southeastern Michigan. For the purpose of surveying lands in this vicinity of Michigan a base line was run on or near the parallel of forty-two degrees and thirty minutes north latitude. A principal north-and-south line, known as the principal meridian, was run at right angles, of course, with the base line, and extending throughout the entire length of the lower peninsula. This meridian line is the boundary between Lenawee and Hillsdale counties. The ranges in Kent county were numbered west from the principal meridian, and the towns were numbered north from the base. Kent county, as has been stated, was included in the reservation known as "Congress lands," and it might be added that the lands within its limits were sold by the Federal government at the statutory price of \$1.25 per acre. Early provisions were made for the support of free schools, and Congress reserved one-thirty-sixth part of all lands lying northwest of the Ohio river for their maintenance, the lands in Michigan thus becoming the nucleus of the present magnificent school fund of the state.

We will now return and take up events incidental to the formation, organization and development of Kent county. After the formation of the Ohio state government in 1803, Michigan remained without any semblance of county government or organizations until 1815. The first laying out and naming and defining the boundaries of the county of Kent is to be found in an Act of the Legislative Council, March 2, 1831, and until duly organized it was to be attached to Kalamazoo county. The county as then formed was in extent and according to boundaries the same as it is today, with the exception of the two tiers of townships on the north, which were added to it at a later date.

Although Kent county was created by the above mentioned legislative enactment, it remained unorganized, so far as governmental functions were concerned, until March 24, 1836, when its organization



was provided for by the provisions of "An Act to organize the county of Kent," and the county took its place among the separate and distinct political divisions of the future state of Michigan.

Of the Indian tribes inhabiting the Grand River Valley when the first definite knowledge of the country was acquired, the Ottawas were the most prominent, while other tribes were represented in fewer numbers. Later, still other tribes made their appearance, but it was chiefly with the Ottawas that the pioneers of this section had to deal. This tribe had possession at the time of the final treaty, and it was with it that negotiations were made providing for the Indian exodus. The Indians were slow to join with the tide of western emigration, however, and for many years afterward wandering bands would annually visit their old hunting grounds in Kent county, and their intercourse with the settlers came to be regarded more as an occasion of pleasant remembrance than of dread or danger. Some pleasant friendships were formed between the pioneer families and the former owners of the land which the pale-face was tilling.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE THOMAS MISSION

TREATY OF CHICAGO—TWO MISSIONS PROJECTED—HARDSHIPS ENDURED BY EARLY MISSIONARIES—EXPERIENCES OF ISAAC MCCOY—HIS FIRST VISIT TO GRAND RIVER VALLEY—GOSA, A FRIENDLY INDIAN—UNRESTRICTED SALE OF LIQUORS—THE MISSION BUILDINGS—OUR INDIAN LEGEND—LEONARD SLATER—REMOVAL OF MISSION TO BARRY COUNTY.

The treaty of Chicago was concluded, Aug. 29, 1821, between Lewis Cass and Solomon Sibley, on the part of the United States, and chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippewas, and Pottawatamies nations. As this treaty furnished the basis for the first permanent white settlement of the Grand River Valley, its provisions are of interest and importance. According to the terms of the treaty, the Indians ceded all lands within the following boundaries:

“Beginning at a point on the south bank of the river St. Joseph of Lake Michigan, near the Parc aux Vaches, due north from Rum’s village, and thence running south to a line drawn east from the south extreme of Lake Michigan, thence with a said line east to the tract ceded by the Pattiwatimas to the United States by the treaty of Fort Meigs, in 1817, if the said line should strike the said tract; but if the said line should pass north of the said tract, then such line shall be continued until it strikes the western boundary of the tract ceded to the United States by the treaty of Detroit, in 1807, and from the termination of the said line following the boundaries of former cessions to the main branch of the Grand River of Lake Michigan, should any of the said lines cross the said river; but if none of the said lines should cross the said river, then to a point due east of the source of the said main branch of the said river, and from such point due west to the source of the said principal branch, and from the crossing of the said river, or from the source thereof as the case may be, down the said river on the north bank thereof, to the mouth; thence following the shore of Lake Michigan to the south bank of the said river St. Joseph, at the mouth, thereof, and thence with the said south bank to the place of beginning.”

The wording of this treaty is somewhat complicated, and the boundaries outlined are vague, but as this is the deed upon which rests the title of every land owner in Kent County, south of Grand River, it is well to preserve the description in its entirety. The Indians reserved several tracts for villages, but none of these were located on Grand River. A number of personal grants were also made which show the extent to which the early traders had intermarried with the tribes. Those located on Grand river were as follows: “To Theresa Chandler or To-e-ak-qui, a Pattiwatima woman, and to her daughter, Betsey Fisher, one section of land on the south side of the Grand river, opposite to the Spruce Swamp.” “To John Riley, son of Me-naw-cum-ago-quoi, one section of land, at the mouth



of the river Au Foin, on the Grand River, and extending up the said river, and a like grant to Peter Riley, extending down the river." Joseph La Framboise and William Knoggs were also among those remembered as of Indian blood. Article 4 of this treaty contained provisions of the utmost importance to Grand Rapids and read as follows: "In consideration of the cession aforesaid, the United States engage to pay to the Ottawa nation, one thousand dollars in specie, annually forever, and also to appropriate annually, for the term of ten years, the sum of fifteen hundred dollars, to be expended as the President may direct, in the support of a blacksmith, of a teacher, and of a person to instruct the Ottawas in agriculture, and in the purchase of cattle and farming utensils. And the United States also engage to pay to the Pattawatima nation five thousand dollars in specie, annually, for the term of twenty years, and also to appropriate annually, for the term of fifteen years, the sum of one thousand dollars, to be expended as the President may direct, in the support of a blacksmith and a teacher. And one mile square shall be selected, under the direction of the President, on the north side of Grand River, and one mile square on the south side of the St. Joseph, and within the Indian lands not ceded, upon which the blacksmiths and teachers employed for the said tribes, respectively, shall reside." One of the Ottawa chiefs signing this treaty was Kewagoushoum and another was Kay-nee-wee, both of whom were well known to the early settlers of Grand River Valley.

While this treaty was concluded in 1821, it was not for twelve years, or until 1833, that the first of the so-called American settlers came to the Grand River valley, with the Dexter colony. During this intervening period the Grand River valley was occupied only by the Indians, a few traders and the missions founded upon the stipulation of the foregoing treaty.

As appears from the foregoing treaties, there were two missions projected under the foregoing stipulations, one on the north side of Grand river, one mile square, and the other on the south side of the St. Joseph, of the same dimensions. These two missions were in the care of the Baptist denomination and were named by the board of that denomination in care of missionary efforts. These names commemorated the two missionaries of that denomination who first entered upon missionary labors in Hindustan, Revs. Thomas and Carey. The Grand river mission was known to them as the Thomas Mission and the St. Joseph effort was called the Carey Mission.

Why the period of twelve years was allowed to elapse from the granting of these lands by the Indians to the first American settlement can best be understood by reading the account of the hardships endured by the early missionaries. Too little has been said in prior histories of Kent County concerning the life and work of Isaac McCoy. If any man is worthy of a monument erected in loving memory of those who unselfishly devoted themselves to the uplifting of mankind in this region, it is Isaac McCoy; but because he followed his beloved Indians to the West before the American settlers arrived in the valley, his work has received but little attention, and no tablet has been erected to his memory. The volume which he wrote, entitled a "History of Baptist Indian Missions," is one of the most thrilling and



interesting stories of frontier life ever written, and the story of the first white settlement at Grand Rapids is best told, largely, in his own words. Mr. McCoy prefaces his volume with this paragraph, which gives the keynote of his understanding of the Indian problem and his never failing sympathy with the Red Men: "Whether Europeans on coming to America supposed that the Indians, on account of their unsettled habits, had no ideas of claims to land and were strangers to the love of country, or whether they supposed that the claims of these naked, unlettered and comparatively inoffensive people ought not to be respected by civilized nations, is uncertain, but whatever their views, they at once decided that the aboriginal tribes were not the owners of the lands they occupied, and therefore they laid claim to the whole country, without a knowledge of its existence. The first step in Indian affairs was wrong and was the beginning of a policy unrighteous in principle and oppressive in its operations. This principle was universally adopted—all denied the Indians were the owners of the country, and, therefore, the whole was divided among European governments, each one of which made such arrangements as it chose to companies or individuals of its subjects." It will thus be seen that Mr. McCoy felt that the Indians had been robbed of their heritage and that the white men owed them not only financial recompense but consideration and kindness. The book written by Mr. McCoy is filled with many details not of interest to the people of this region, for his work began in Ohio, took him to Indiana, thence to Michigan, and later to the Indian territory. It must also be remembered that in his writings he is not always entirely fair to those of other creeds. He was, possibly, obsessed by the idea that there was no road to salvation, either for red or for white, save through baptism by immersion, and he had little sympathy with or confidence in missionaries of Catholic, Methodist, or other denominations. While his views may appear narrow and bigoted, it is nevertheless a fact that bigotry is almost an essential of real missionary zeal. No man could be tempted to deny himself all the comforts and luxuries of civilization, to endure cold and hunger, to see his loved ones sicken and die, to forgive grievous wrongs which would stir almost any red-blooded man to acts of vengeance, unless he was thoroughly and absolutely convinced that his belief was the right and, in fact, the only right one. The reader should bear in mind, therefore, that while his views were restricted to the confines of the Baptist faith, he was a man who made the supreme sacrifice for what he believed to be right, and his whole career was untainted with anything approaching dishonesty.

It was in 1817 that Isaac McCoy, then a young married man, wrote to the officials of the Baptist missionary convention of the United States, asking to be accepted as a missionary to the Indian tribes. He had already been on a preaching tour along the Mississippi Valley, among the destitute white settlers, but he chose to labor among the Indians, and, on Oct. 17, 1817, he was commissioned, for one year, as missionary among the tribes of Indiana and Illinois. His first work was in the neighborhood of Fort Wayne, and the story of his work there among the drunken and degenerate Indians is graphically told. The missionary board was poor, and its field was wide; to many, work among the Hindoos had a more attractive and roman-



tic call than work among the American Indians whom they knew to be savage, brutal and unappreciative. For this reason, funds for the western missionaries were scarce and McCoy was obliged to rely largely upon individual charities for his support. These sources failed to supply the mission, and McCoy resolved to apply for government aid. In company with a mail carrier, he set out for Detroit, some 200 miles through the forest, and was accorded an interview with Governor Cass, who, according to McCoy, "listened to the story of our wants with sympathy that does honor to humanity." Governor Cass not only gave sympathy, but furnished clothing and food for the Indian pupils from Government funds which he had in his control. It was at this time that McCoy made representations to Governor Cass which led to the provisions for missions which were made in the Chicago treaty. The time of the missionary was divided between preaching, teaching and farming, interrupted by arduous journeys to Ohio to solicit funds. His wife not only bore him many children, but shared all the hardships and privations of the frontier. Speaking of her work at this time the missionary said: "Mrs. McCoy, in addition to domestic labors, in common teaches the larger girls the use of the needle and the spinning wheel. She is more confined to the house than I am, and in the daily routine of her labor there is more sameness than in mine; and on many accounts, her business is calculated more deeply to depress the spirits and to unnerve the constitution than mine. The apprehension that both her strength and spirits are sinking has become another source of disquietude to me. I endeavor to conceal from her as much of that which is discouraging in our affairs as possible, and to place the better side of our prospects toward her; I am oppressed with many an anxious thought which I dare not communicate to her."

Knowing that the treaty was about to be made at Chicago, and being unable to leave his mission, he sent his teacher, accompanied by Abraham Burnett, an Indian pupil, as his messenger, for, as he said, "It was at this treaty that we had been hoping to make some arrangements for getting to a more suitable location for the missions and was relieved by a visit from Colonel Trimble, of Ohio, a United States senator, who was on his way to the treaty meeting. McCoy reduced his proposition to writing and Senator Trimble exercised his good offices in behalf of the missionary work at the Chicago conference. McCoy was greatly rejoiced over this stipulation in the treaty and said: "To bring about such an arrangement as this has caused us much labor, watchfulness and anxiety. Others in their intercourse with the Indians had money and goods with which to purchase their consent to measures to which they otherwise felt disinclined; but we had neither money nor conscience that could thus be used. We had, also, many strong prejudices of the natives to contend with in the matter and still worse passions, which were opposed to us by some mischievous white men. At the moment, when in council, the Putawatomes demanded of the commissioners a teacher, a certain Roman Catholic Frenchman, who was a United States Indian agent, and he, at the time, was interpreting for the commissioners, stated to them that the Indians desired a teacher being a Roman Catholic. The Indians, the moment they were made, by one of their party who un-



derstood English, to understand what had been just stated, positively contradicted the statement and declared that they had not requested a Catholic teacher; that I was the man whom they desired to be their teacher." McCoy secured the position of teacher to the Pottawatamies at the salary of \$400 per year, all of which he threw into the fund for the support of the mission and regularly accounted for it to the Board of Missions. The salary of the blacksmith was placed at \$365 a year and the \$1,500 per annum, allowed to the Ottawas, also provided for the employment of laborers. The teacher whom he had trusted as a messenger to Chicago endeavored to supplant him as superintendent of the Ottawa Mission, but this plot failed and Mr. McCoy went about making preparations to take advantage of the Government support. This included a journey to Washington, where he was received by John C. Calhoun, secretary of war, and his request was granted that Mr. Sears be appointed teacher for the Ottawas. It was on his return from this journey, after he had been for four years in the mission field, facing cold and hunger many times and meeting all the hardships of the frontier, combined with direct poverty, for the sole purpose of educating the Indians and leading them to a better life, that he met what may well be believed to have been the greatest trial of his life. This story, told in his own words, gives the best possible idea of the fearful conditions under which he and his family lived among the savages, and of the spirit which guided him. Mr. McCoy writes as follows:

"It is now in order for me to tell of the severest trial that I have ever experienced in my pilgrimage, in doing which I shall copy from my journal: 'When about five miles from home, I received the distressing intelligence that two days before a Putawatomie Indian had almost murdered one of our little daughters, about nine years of age. She and two of our Indian girls, larger than she, went on an errand about two hundred yards from the house, and the greater part of the way in full view from the house, when three Indians appeared at a little distance from them, one of whom made towards the larger Indian girl. The children fled for their lives. Our daughter, being the least, and being more affected by the fright than the others, and accidentally falling as she ascended the river bank, was left in the rear and fell into the hands of the savage. He choked her until she was on the point of expiring. The Indian girls alarmed the family. Her distressed mother and many others hastened to her relief. Mr. Edmund Liston, an Englishman hired to labor, and Mungosa, one of our Miami lads, first reached the place of the horrid scene, which was just as the child apparently was struggling in the agonies of death and still in the grasp of the monster. He fled and they pursued him, while the two other Indians followed closely in their rear. Liston soon overtook him and knocked him down with a club and beat him severely. Mungosa, on coming up, drew his knife and would have despatched him, but was prevented by Liston. The mother, and many of our family, reached the child before she could breathe. The blood was issuing from her neck, mouth and nose, with a considerable quantity of sand and earth in her mouth. The feelings of her mother can be more easily conceived than described. The design of the Indian was of the basest kind, but happily the child was not injured



beyond what we mention in this place. Her neck was gashed with the monster's nails and her lungs were injured by violent exertions for breath. Her eyes and face soon swelled frightfully, but she recovered. The Indian was tried, but subsequently was set at liberty until the agent should return, and he at once left the neighborhood." "This circumstance," states Mr. McCoy, "puts our missionary zeal to a test. O, how hard it is to regard a people affectionately, who, while we are toiling and suffering solely for their benefit, and not our own, thus cruelly requite us. I have quitted the society of relatives and many desirable Christian privileges, with a degree of cheerfulness; I have spent many days and nights at a time in the wilderness, without seeing the face of a white man, and was content with the company and fare of the natives; I have repeatedly slept on the ground, under falls of rain and of snow, without much depression of spirit; I have seen the native struggling in the agonies of death, occasioned by the murderous hand of his fellow, and have assisted in burying the murdered, and found my desires for the salvation of the surviving enlarged, and my zeal in the work of reformation increased; from hand which laid hold on me in the wilderness, to deprive me of life, I have escaped, with resolution to persevere in my efforts to teach them better things. But, alas! this abuse of my dear little daughter, who could not provoke insult, and her narrow escape from greater injury, has taught me a lesson of human frailty which I had not previously learned by experience. The tale of woe, connected with an account of the screams of the affrighted child, of the tears running over more than forty faces of our family, of the anguish of a mother, aggravated by many local considerations, together with the subsequent artless exclamations of the child—"O, he hurt me so much!"—bore down my spirits and deprived me of resolution. I was sinking, when the everlasting arms underneath prevented my fall. Should I endure to the end, let God have all the praise."

The missionary found grace to go on with his work and it would seem that nothing more is necessary to be said as to the quality and strength of his Christian zeal. It is well to know that the three Indians continued their drunken career and, in a quarrel among themselves, two of the three, including the savage who had attacked the little girl, were killed; thus the crime was speedily avenged without intervention on Mr. McCoy's part.

The first religious services were held at Carey station on Oct. 20, 1822, McCoy preaching to the little company in their tents, while the rain was falling rapidly around them. It was not until December that the missionary was ready to move his family and such of the Indians as were desired to accompany them from Fort Wayne to Carey. There were thirty-two persons in this company, and on account of the snow and the ice, which made difficult the crossing of St. Mary's river, they made but three miles the first day of the journey. Friendly Indians brought them venison, but it was nine days before the company reached the St. Joseph, with men and oxen almost at the point of exhaustion. McCoy found at Carey two laborers, whom Governor Cass had employed for the Ottawa station, but McCoy was allowed to use them for the winter. One of the first moves was in the erection of a school house, and the first school at Carey was

opened, Jan. 27, 1823, with thirty Indian pupils. There was thus a large number of mouths to be fed and, on Feb. 1, the missionary's journal said: "Having eaten up our corn and having only flour enough for one meal, we sent five of our stoutest Indian boys five miles, to an Indian trader, and borrowed a barrel of flour and a bushel of corn. Our teams were absent and the boys carried it home upon their backs. The flour was damaged; nevertheless, it was very acceptable." On Feb. 7, the journal said: "Ate our last meal of bread for breakfast, which was so scarce that we had to divide it carefully that everyone might take a little. We had saved a few pounds of flour for the small children, whose necessities were increased by the want of milk." An Indian was sent out who managed to obtain six quarts of corn, and messengers were sent to Fort Wayne for relief. On Feb. 8, the company breakfasted upon the six quarts of corn, procured the preceding day, and McCoy writes in his journal: "Blessed be God, we have not yet suffered for want of food, because corn is an excellent substitute for bread. But having now eaten our last corn, we can not avoid feeling some uneasiness about the next meal."

As often shown in his writing, McCoy was intolerant and regarded the Catholics, particularly, as enemies of his work, and believed that the followers of that faith were on the highway to eternal damnation; nevertheless, when he, in his desperation, set forth through the deep snow in search of food for his well-nigh famished flock, it was a Roman Catholic, Bertrand, a French trader, who came to his relief. While floundering through the snow, he met Bertrand and explained the situation. The trader said it would be impossible to get food from the Indians. "But," said he, in broken English, "I got some corn, some flour; I give you half. Suppose you die, I die too." The noble act of this trader in dividing his scant store with the Protestant missionary does not seem to have impressed McCoy greatly, but he was moved to give thanks to Providence, saying: "Thus we had scarcely eaten our last meal, when God sent us another."

The mission managed to survive the winter and, on May 26, McCoy started for the contemplated station among the Ottawas. A Frenchman named Paget acted as guide and an Indian pupil and a government laborer made up the party. Paget proved worthless as a pilot and the party was happy to reach an Indian camp after swimming the Kekemazoo River (which McCoy insists to be the correct spelling for the Kalamazoo). He found the natives drinking in one of the Ottawa villages which he passed the following day, with the women drinking in a house by themselves. On May 30, by the help of an Indian and his canoe, they crossed the Grand River at the village of Kewikishkum, who was absent. A commissioner, appointed by Governor Cass for the location of the mission, and Mr. Sears had previously been to the Grand River country and Mr. Sears had described to McCoy the proposed site for the Ottawa station. McCoy found no place answering the description, and after searching nine miles down the river, reconnoitered in order to select a building place, and lodged at a trading house. Mr. McCoy does not give the name of this trader, nor any description by which the location may be identi-



fied, except that it was in the immediate vicinity of Kewikishkum's village. Rix Robinson's post was established in the vicinity of Ada, in 1821, while Louis Campau is not supposed to have come to the Grand River Valley until 1826.

The missionary's account of his first visit to the Grand River Valley is so graphic and gives such an interesting picture of Indian customs, and incidents it is here quoted. After mentioning the fact that he lodged at a trading house, Mr. McCoy wrote: "At this place an old woman, evidently a white woman, brought her son to me that I might heal him of the disease of convulsive fits, with which he had been afflicted from infancy, and by which he had become an idiot. She said that a relation of hers had informed her that one of her children had been afflicted in the same manner and that a Catholic priest had cured the disease by his prayers. She had taken this young man to an Indian who was reputed to be skilled in such cases, but the conjurer had not succeeded in this. He alleged, as the cause of his failure, that this disease was under the influence of the moon, and he could not control the moon. She had applied with no better success to a second conjurer, who also attributed the affliction to the influence of the moon. Both physicians, however, had united in opinion that I could control the moon and heal the diseased, and, accordingly, they had advised her to bring her son to me, which she had done. She believed that I had power to heal her son, as the Indian doctors had reported, in which opinion she was confirmed by discovering a favourable change in the symptoms of the disease since my arrival. I patiently listened to the old woman's tale before I said anything in reply, and the purport of my answer may easily be conjectured."

The expedition to the Grand River Valley returned to Carey, on June 5, having been unsuccessful in establishing a mission for the reasons noted by Mr. McCoy. The mission at Carey prospered and, by July 1, sixty acres were fenced, and there was a large school of both Indian boys and girls. It was not until September that a second effort was made to establish the mission on the Grand River. In relation to this, Mr. McCoy said: "Times being pretty hard in relation to pecuniary matters, it behooves us not to leave a stone unturned that might possibly offer relief. We therefore determined that, notwithstanding the onerous duties which devolved on us at Carey, we would make a vigorous effort to get matters into operation among the Ottawas. We could receive no government allowance for the Ottawas until we actually commenced, and we should also be repaid for all the property, such as wagons, oxen, etc., purchased for the station, and which was still on hand. Notwithstanding we needed at Carey, one or two others like Mr. Lykins, the necessity seemed to demand his attention to the Ottawas, which he gave, in the hope that the Governor would confer on him the appointment of teacher and thus secure to him a salary of \$400, which sum would be applied to the support of the mission. In order to allay the prejudice of the savages, it was proposed to commence with a smithery on the line between the Ottawas and the Pottawatamies; and preparations were made accordingly; but, although a delegation of Ottawas called and appeared much pleased with the proffered assistance, nothing was done until



November, when a blacksmith shop was erected on the Kalamazoo river, among the Ottawas. One Indian followed the party, threatening them and forbidding them to proceed through the Ottawa lands, but a council of the chiefs quieted the trouble and the Ottawas were soon much pleased with the work of the missionaries. In spite of the government aid, the Carey mission was faced by continued financial difficulties. McCoy made a trip to the East to solicit funds, securing enough to pay the debts of the mission and to procure some additional supplies. He returned by way of Detroit, and with him came Robert Simerwell, who took an active part in the work of the missions. Iron and steel for the smitheries was bought at Detroit and loaded on a vessel which Simerwell accompanied to the mouth of the St. Joseph river, while McCoy went on horseback through the wilderness. McCoy arrived at the Carey station to find the vessel delayed and the supplies almost exhausted. There were supplies for but one day, and the Indian pupils were sent to keep up a fire in order that the smoke, being seen from the vessel, might point out the place of landing. The vessel opportunely arrived and William Polke, who had joined the mission, superintended the loading of the supplies into pirogues for transportation from the mouth of the river to the mission. At Detroit, McCoy obtained from Governor Cass the appointment of Polke as teacher for the Ottawas in place of Mr. Sears. Polke had visited the Ottawas once, but had not made any definite arrangement with them, excepting that the government laborers had afforded them some assistance in improving their land. Mr. Polke set out for the Ottawa station, on June 29, 1824, with tools for the smithery, a blacksmith, and an Indian pupil as an apprentice. He had a wagon and two yokes of oxen, driven by another Indian boy. He left two public laborers to work for the Ottawas, but soon returned to Carey. These repeated efforts made a favorable impression among the Ottawas and a delegation visited the Carey mission and reported that their tribe was deeply interested and desired that the smithery be located on the Grand River, in a central and more eligible place. This was the effect which McCoy had desired to produce by establishing the smithery on the Kalamazoo River, and, by September, the Ottawas again expressed their desire for the establishment of a mission and urged a personal visit from McCoy. He was unable to comply with this request, but sent letters by three Indian pupils to the blacksmith, who was to read them to the inhabitants of each village, to be interpreted by the Indian boys. "This measure," said McCoy, "tended to cherish kind feeling among the Ottawas. Assisted by one of the United States laborers, a stack of prairie hay was made before their return for the subsistence of our oxen through the succeeding winter. They brought home with them for our school an Ottawa girl, about seven years old." In November, 1824, the Carey mission was visited by John L. Leib, of Detroit, as a special commissioner of the Government, to examine the affairs of the mission. He was accompanied by Colonel Godfroy. The commissioner found the Carey mission in excellent condition and, relative to the Thomas mission, said: "I should have proceeded to the Grand River, had I not learned that the contemplated establishment there had not as yet been effected. There can be no doubt that great pains had been taken to prejudice the Ottawas against any loca-



tion at Grand River, under the direction of a Protestant association; and they have been made to say that a Catholic establishment would be welcome. It can be easily conceived how this feeling has been produced; but it can not exist long, in as much as a policy has been pursued by the superintendent at Carey by which not only the salutary purpose contemplated by the government will be achieved without opposition, but a settlement courted. A temporary smithery, the most important of all, in the view of the Indians, has been erected at the river Kekemazoo, about midway between St. Joseph's and Grand Rivers, at which much work has been done for the Ottawas and some for the Putawatomies. The hands employed by the Indian Department have built for one of the Ottawas a considerable cabin and, besides assisting others, have made coal for the smithery and hay for cattle. The superintendent was about to repair to Grand River as soon as I left St. Joseph with the purpose of erecting buildings thereat, suitable to the objects of the intended institution. No opposition was apprehended, as the benefits derived from the temporary smithery on Kekemazoo, and the extensive usefulness of the establishment on the St. Joseph made many of the Ottawas desirous of a settlement for like purposes in their own neighborhood."

It was soon after this that Gosa, who was one of the most friendly of the Ottawas, arrived at the mission with a message from the Indians of Grand River, earnestly requesting McCoy to visit them. The missionary responded to this invitation and left Carey, Nov. 24, 1824, accompanied by Sawyer, the blacksmith; C. Mettez, a laborer, and Gosa. They found the smithery on the Kekemazoo destroyed, and it was said that in the absence of the smith the Indians had undertaken to work at the forge and had fired and nearly burnt up the house. The party encamped at Gun Lake and, the following day, McCoy had an interview with Naoqua Keshuck, an Ottawa chief, who said he had long desired to see McCoy and had sent a messenger to learn why the visit had been so long delayed. He urged McCoy to make a settlement at his village at the rapids of Grand River, declaring that he and some others desired to adopt the habits of civilized life and would be glad to avail themselves of the mission. He said he was anxious for the establishment of a school for the benefit of the youth, and wished also to hear preaching. He added: "I am an Indian; nevertheless, I think of God and of religion, and had we a preacher among us, perhaps I could become good." McCoy told the chief what he proposed to do, but the Indian feared that McCoy would deceive him as other white men had done and asked that he commit his proposals to writing. This McCoy did, and the chief said: "In token of friendship I take hold of your hand; I take fast hold of it. God sees us take hold of each other's hands and will be witness against him who shall deceive." Mr. McCoy said, continuing the narrative of this journey: "We camped on the following day, Nov. 29, and proceeded toward the rapids of Grand River. At twelve o'clock, we were joined by Noonday, alias Naoqua Keshuck, Gosa having left us. That night I was violently attacked by dysentery, effected by the mode of living, necessary on my journey. I usually carried medicines with me, but at this time, happening to have none, the skill of both Noonday and myself was put in requisition in seeking vegetable remedies in the forest.



I spent the night in great distress. But with some abatement of pain, I became able to sit on my horse on the following day, but remained continually indisposed during the remainder of the tour." Thus it will be seen that it was Noonday who welcomed the white missionary and urged that the mission be located at the rapids of the Grand River. Thus the location of the village, first adopted by the Mound Builders, and later used by the Indians, was brought to the notice of the whites. It was the value of the Grand River for transportation purposes which influenced the Mound Builders, the Indians, and the missionaries; it remained for the white settlers to conceive the idea that the swiftly flowing rapids could furnish almost unlimited power for the handicraft of man. Thus, while Grand Rapids owes much to the energy and enterprise of the pioneers, the first debt of gratitude owed by citizens of Grand Rapids is due to Nature—to the great glaciers by which the bed of Grand River was formed, and along which its waters forced their way over the rocky channel to seek the lower level of the lakes; and every citizen should remember that, primarily, all the greatness of Grand Rapids, its vast enterprises, its costly public buildings, its beautiful streets and parks, its comfortable, happy homes, are due to the swiftly flowing waters of the Grand River rapids. Latterly, they owe a debt to Noonday, the wise and friendly chief, who welcomed the missionary in such kindly fashion, and to Isaac McCoy, who had the good judgment to act upon Noonday's advice. Continuing the narrative, Mr. McCoy said:

"Two days later, we reached Grand River, which it was necessary that we should cross. Noonday had two canoes hid in the brush, smaller than I had ever before seen. He brought one on his shoulder and, placing it in the river, directed me to lie down in it, as in a sitting posture there would be danger of capsizing. When I was thus adjusted, he said he believed he could get me across, as I did not appear to be so heavy as a deer he had once taken over in the same canoe. I spent the night encamped and, assisted by the chief, made examination on horseback for the purpose of selecting a site for our mission station. Having marked out a place, and giving the chief some advice in relation to buildings and fields which he desired to make, on Dec. 2, I set out for home."

McCoy employed Gosa to assist the blacksmith and the French laborer in taking the smith's tools from the Kekenmazoo to the new location at the rapids of Grand River. The attempt failed, however, on account of ice in the waters which they were required to navigate, and McCoy returned to Carey on Dec. 17, but the blacksmith, William Sawyer, with two laborers soon left Carey to improve the Grand River station. The blacksmith did not return to Carey until February, 1825, having spent the winter on the Grand River. On March 10, 1825, Mr. Polke, with the blacksmith, an Indian apprentice and a laborer, set out in pirogues for the Grand River station, availing themselves of the assistance of Gosa. Polke found a majority of the Ottawas well disposed toward the mission and the prospects for its usefulness very pleasing. At the same time, some malicious persons had resolved on breaking up the establishment. From time immemorial the rapids of Grand River had been a place of great resort in the spring on account of the facility with which fish could be caught,



and, in accordance with this custom, many were now encamped there. A council having been proposed, the opposers of the mission delayed, with the design that Mr. Polke should leave for the St. Joseph before it should be convened. These men had brought whiskey on the ground to aid in making disturbances. All, however, appeared friendly toward Mr. Polke, except one, who, as was afterwards learned, had previously meditated mischief. Mr. Polke, in his journal, said: 'I had been requested by some of the Indians to remain at the place another day, in the hope of being able to have a council. I was undecided, when a circumstance occurred which induced me to remain. Many Indians near our house were in a state of intoxication. The blacksmith, our apprentice, and Gosa were on the margin of the river, while I was standing on the river bank, near our door, looking at some canoes of the fishermen in the river, when more noise than usual occurred in an Indian camp near. At this instant the fishermen in the canoes, who could perceive what was going on in the camp, hallooed lustily to us on the bank. I could not understand them; but Gosa, who understood them, rushed up the river bank toward the men. On turning my eyes toward the camp, I discovered an Indian running toward me with a gun in his hand. I apprehended that his intention was to shoot me, and I resolved that, as he raised his gun to fire, I would try to save myself by a sudden leap down the bank. He approached within about eighteen yards, when he abruptly halted to fire. In the attempt to raise his gun he was seized by Gosa. The fellow made a violent effort to accomplish his purpose. The Indian apprentice boy came to Gosa's assistance and they disarmed the wicked man, who was taken away by some of the people of his camp.'

Despite these dangers and discouragements Mr. Polke again visited the Grand River mission and returned to Carey, May 17, 1825. He reported that he found the Indians friendly; many expressed regret that he had been insulted on a previous visit and hoped nothing of the kind would again occur. Even the man who had made the attempt upon his life had, since that time, indicated a disposition to conciliate those connected with the mission. Mr. Polke also found a favorable attention to public religious exercises, which he had the happiness of performing while at the station. The blacksmith and the two workmen for the Ottawas were laboring to great advantage. Improvements in the erection of dwellings, in the making of fences, and in plowing were advancing. The Indians themselves were becoming animated with their prospects of better conditions and began to labor with their own hands much more than they had previously done. "We stated to them that the government had placed under our control only two white men to labor for them. These could do but little, compared with the amount of labor needed by the neighborhood. They must therefore take hold themselves, and if, for instance, they could not manage a plow and oxen themselves, let them furnish a man to work with the laborers, and by this means they would learn to manage the plow and oxen, and two plows, instead of one, could be kept constantly moving by the two laborers. To two families we had loaned milch cows for their encouragement. The Ottawas also expressed a desire to avail themselves of the advantages of schools and solicited the establishment of one among them as soon as practicable, which,



we assured them would be done. Three children had been sent by them, from Grand River, to the school at Carey. Soon a small mill was made, with materials obtained in the neighborhood, which was turned by hand. One strong man at this constantly was able barely to make a meal, of a poor quality, sufficient for bread of Indian corn, but wheat flour could not be ground."

The nearer approach of the whites and the unrestricted sale of liquors warned the good missionary that, if the Indian was to be preserved, he must be removed from white influence. McCoy also had financial difficulties; government pay was sure, but slow, and he was forced to go to Ohio to solicit support. Gosa, his Ottawa friend, accompanied him on this tour, which was extended to Washington and to New York. In July, Mr. Polke resigned from the mission and Mr. Lykins was appointed government teacher for the Ottawas. At this time Mr. McCoy writes: "Settlements of white people were rapidly multiplying near us, attended with ruinous effects upon the Indian. We were almost invariably treated respectfully, but the devil and whiskey sellers appeared to pull down faster than we could build up. In August, intoxication prevailed to such an extent on Grand River that our young men, employed as smiths and laborers, requested leave to abandon the station. An attempt had been made on the life of our friend Gosa, and, in one case, he and his family took refuge in the house with our young men, where the whole party remained watching all night. Recovering from a bacchanalian revel and finding the young men inclined to leave them, they sent Gosa as messenger to us to entreat us to continue our efforts for them, promising better manners in the future and requesting me to visit them." They charged that their disturbances had been prompted by a white man, who, McCoy declared, was the same who had protested against the establishment of the Protestant mission at the time of the Chicago treaty. McCoy replied, encouraging the young men not to abandon the station and promising to visit them. The missionary also told of the difficulty in delivering supplies to the distant station at Grand River and said: "The navigation of these upper lakes was at this time in its incipient state, and supplies by this route were often attended with great expense. Sundry articles of importance to us had been left at Chicago, and we had the expense of sending a barge for them. On Sept. 5, 1825, we started a pirogue to Grand River with iron and steel and other articles needed at that station. On the following day, with Naoquett, a Frenchman, and an Indian, we set out for the same place by land with five head of cattle. On the way our Indian sickened and we had to send him ten miles to find a shelter in an Indian village. Reaching Grand River in five days, having suffered not a little inconvenience at some of our encampments on account of the scarcity of water, I delivered to the Indians, plows, yokes, chains and other farming utensils, and mechanical tools forwarded by the Government. The articles were not of good quality, disturbing the confidence of the Indians, but they, nevertheless, seemed inspired with new hope and made new promises to endeavor to do well. Some who had been induced to oppose the mission at Grand River visited me while there and appeared to have become entirely satisfied. We had as yet little improvement in buildings or farming at this station."



Hands were now set to work to erect permanent log buildings, the people entreated that a school be furnished and the missionary was deeply impressed by their earnestness and the improvements being made. Regarding the Grand River mission he said: "The place we had selected for the establishment of the mission, we could easily perceive, would one day become a place of importance, much more so than that which had been selected for it by the commissioner of the United States. That our estimate of the local advantages of the new site was not erroneous will be seen in the sequel." By Dec. 26, 1826, the missionary was able to report the erection of three neat buildings at Grand River, one being for a school, but Mr. McCoy was impressed with the importance of removing the Indians and was preparing to accompany them west.

Relative to the Mound Builders, Chief Gosa related an interesting legend, which was, probably, believed by many: "Three ages ago, that is, when the grandfather of him who is now an old man was born, some Ottawas at this place (Rapids of Grand river, Michigan) experiencing great inconvenience on account of having no vessel in which they could prepare their food, set about making a pot of earth. The vessel, being placed over the fire, broke. Other trials were made to construct a substantial vessel, all of which were unsuccessful; none yet could be made impervious to fluids, or that would resist the action of fire. After two days' fruitless labour, and when the workmen were hungry for want of a vessel in which to prepare their food, they sat down in despair and wept. On a night, not long after, a spirit appeared to one of them in a dream, and inquired, 'Why do you weep?' The sleeper answered, 'Because I am poor—I have no pot. Why did you create me and place me here, to suffer poverty and disappointment, without remedy?' The spirit pointed down to the lakes, and said, 'Go in that direction, and I will accompany you, and you shall find relief.' They set off, and the spirit, unperceived by day, accompanied them and conversed with them every night. They passed the islands of Mackinaw and Montreal and reached Quebec. At the latter place they found the French, who extended to them the hand of friendship, and who furnished them with an iron pot, to which were added other useful articles of which they had previously been destitute. Their Spiritual guide, having fulfilled his errand of kindness, now discontinued his communion."

In the spring of 1827, there were twenty-one Indian pupils at the Thomas mission, the buildings had been improved, fifteen acres of land was fenced and the most of this had been planted with corn, potatoes, and other vegetables. Laborers employed by the Government were recalled during the busy season owing to deficiency in the appropriation, and the missionaries, therefore, worked with the Indians and aided them with their plowing. Mr. McCoy made special study of the Ottawa language, with Noonday and Gosa as instructors, and was soon able to conduct religious services in the Indian tongue. These services were well attended, neighboring Indians walking three-fourths of a mile to attend family prayers, both morning and evening. Mr. McCoy felt it necessary to return to Carey, and the Indians much regretted his going. In this connection, Mr. McCoy related an incident relative to Chief Noonday, which is worth preser-



vation: "Noonday had said that he designed to put a boy, for whom he was guardian (having no children of his own) in our family. He delayed doing so four or five days longer than we had expected. The boy was frequently at our house and we wondered why the brief ceremony of saying, 'Here he is, take him,' should be delayed. These queries were all answered on the following Sunday, when Noonday and his boy appeared at our house very early. 'I wish,' said he, 'to speak to you. I have brought hither my son for the purpose of placing him in the mission family. Jesus, the Son of God, after His death, arose from the dead early on the day of prayer (Sunday). On that account we meet every day of prayer, to pray, to sing, and to talk. It is not right to work on the day of prayer. Therefore, as Jesus arose early on prayer day morning, I have brought my son early this morning, to deliver him to you, to be instructed in things that are good. I thought that if I gave him to you on the morning of the day on which Jesus arose, perhaps He would have mercy upon him.' This was a rare method of honoring the Saviour and the day on which He arose. It was an original thought and one that indicated sincerity, though not a well cultivated understanding."

Mr. Meeker, teacher at Thomas, returned to Carey, and, on May 5, 1827, Mr. and Mrs. Slater arrived at Thomas, making it their home, and a few days later Mr. and Mrs. McCoy and their three little children, and Miss Purchase, left Thomas. Mr. McCoy left the mission in good condition, as Mr. Lykins had contrived to meet a lake vessel at the mouth of the St. Joseph and had forwarded corn and pork and seven barrels of flour which the vessel carried to the mouth of the Grand River, and the supplies were brought to the rapids by pirogue. In leaving the mission, Mr. McCoy said: "I became much attached to these people and was sorry to leave them. A malign influence, emanating from some mischievous whites, had cherished some opposition to us among the Ottawas most remote from us; but, as fast as we had been able to form personal acquaintances we had the happiness to see their suspicions give way and the opposition constantly weakened. We took pains to extend our acquaintance to some whom we could not visit, by sending messages to them by Gosa and others and inviting them to visit us. Excepting the uncommon religious excitement with which we had been blessed at Carey, we had not seen a missionary station in a condition so hopeful as Thomas was at this time."

This was the last time that Mr. McCoy resided at Thomas station, and the affairs of the mission were placed in the hands of Leonard Slater. The latter's administration was not pleasing to the founder of the station and his comments were anything but flattering. The estimate placed upon Mr. Slater by McCoy is not, however, the one generally held by the settlers of the Grand River Valley. Mr. Everett, the pioneer teacher, in his excellent work, entitled, "Memoirs of the Grand River Valley," partially coincides with him and reflects upon the value of the missionary work, saying that, "Hunting is the Indian's trade. You may make an Indian work for a week, but he has no relish for steady work. It is easy to convert Indians. The missionaries have been flattered with their success. Generally the result is not good. The Catholics were more successful than the Prot-



estants, as the Catholics allowed their converts to be Indians. The Protestants dwelt too much on converts and failed to improve the Indians' habits. The French had the Indians' confidence. They recognized Indian manhood, assimilated their habits, took Indian wives, and entered into their feelings and sympathies. The Indians were vindictive and revengeful, but as friends, true and honorable. The white man was safe in the Indian cabin. They had their own division of labor; the men hunted and the women did the home work, and the women were loyal and all were fond of their families, but there was no place in the world for an educated Indian. The mission schools were ashamed of their pupils. They soon left and no good came of it." Relative to Mr. Slater, Mr. Everett said that he was a man of "ardent temperament and strong affections, devoted to his work, of fragile constitution, an ardent Christian teacher, and a careful business man.

"Leonard Slater was born in Massachusetts, in 1802, and his father, Peter Slater, was a member of the distinguished 'Boston Tea-Party,' in which, disguised as an Indian, he did his part in emptying the tea into Boston harbor. Mr. Slater was appointed a missionary, in 1826, and a few weeks later was married to Mary French Ide, who shared with him all the privations of missionary life on the frontier. They made their wedding journey to the Carey mission and soon journeyed to the Grand River station, crossing the Kalamazoo near the old trading post. They remained at Thomas station for nine years, or from 1827 to 1836. Mr. Slater was zealous in promoting the settlement of the whites and took an active part in the pioneer affairs of the community. He was justice of the peace, and was the first postmaster at Grand Rapids, serving by appointment from President Jackson, for four years, from Dec. 22, 1832. The first white child born in Grand Rapids was his daughter, Sarah Emily Slater, born on Aug. 12, 1827. Her arrival was the occasion of much rejoicing among the Indians, and Chief Noonday gave her the Indian name, Som-an-o-qua. She was nursed by an Indian woman, who treated her as an Indian mother would treat her own. Slinging her across her back, she was carried in one position so long that the child's head grew imperfect and partial paralysis ensued, bringing on a spasmodic action of the eye. Two other children, George and Francis, were born at the Thomas mission. The intellect of the first born child was not impaired, however, and she soon learned the Indian tongue, was very helpful as a teacher and much loved by the Indians. Mr. Slater did what he could to discourage the sale of liquor to the Indians, and this was the chief reason why he desired to remove the Indians from white influences. In a biography of Mr. Slater, by Mrs. Mary M. Lewis Hoyt, published in Volume 35 of the Michigan Pioneer Collections, the reasons for the removal were given as follows: "The chief reason of his removing from the Thomas mission in Grand Rapids was owing to the disturbing influences wrought by the selling and giving of liquor to the Indians. The rapid influx of white settlers into Grand Rapids, which began in the spring of 1833, and the demoralizing effect produced upon the Indians thereby, indicated to those in charge the advisability of a removal of the mission, and, in 1833, land was purchased in Prairieville, Barry county, and the mission was removed there, about fifty Indian families in all accompany-



ing Mr. Slater to his new quarters. The sturgeon with which the Grand river had abounded were growing scarce and there was also a lack of meat, for deer will not stay in a region where guns are fired. So, in looking for a new location, it was found that one of the best fishing waters was Gull lake, in Barry county, and the rich findings of pickerel, with which the lake then abounded, gave great satisfaction to these expert fishermen. They built log houses and each family had a piece of ground to work, but they were not farmers and could not be made such in one generation."

According to McCoy's statement, the writer of the above was incorrect as to dates, and the purchase in Barry county was probably made with funds secured at the treaty of 1836, and the removal took place at that time. Chief Noonday was among those who accompanied Slater to Prairieville. One of the chief prides of the mission was the church bell which was brought from Detroit, in 1830, shipped around the lakes to Grand Haven and then to Grand Rapids by a boat; this was removed from Grand Rapids to Prairieville. The Slaters devoted themselves to the mission work, and the Prairieville establishment was not broken up until 1854, when the majority of the "Slater Indians," as they were called, went to the reservation at Pentwater, while others intermarried with the Pottawatamies and joined the Selkirk mission in Allegan County. Mrs. Slater died, in 1852, and Mr. Slater continued the work, with his daughter Emily, until 1854, when he removed to Kalamazoo. At the opening of the Civil War, he volunteered his services and joined the Christian commission, serving without pay at the hospital at Nashville, Tenn. This work undermined his health and he returned to Kalamazoo, where he died, April 27, 1866. Despite the differences of opinion between him and Mr. McCoy, the verdict upon his life work was that it was good and that he labored unselfishly and with the high purpose of benefiting a poor and unfortunate people.

While the missionaries were doing their utmost to uplift, protect, and educate the Indians, there were other white men coming into the country with vastly different purposes in mind. Many of the earliest were French voyageurs and traders who held subordinate positions and who too often were lax in their morals and unscrupulous in their dealings. These men were scattered all through the Indian country, but they left but little trace, save, perhaps, in the intermingled blood of many half-breeds. The French missionaries and explorers, and the later English and American travelers, spoke of them only as "traders" or "voyageurs," and seldom paid them the honor of mentioning their names. There were others, however, who gained the confidence and affection of the Indians by long courses of honorable dealing and, while some of these intermarried with the Indians, they were true to their new ties and their progeny became honored and respected citizens in many communities. There is an Indian tradition to the effect that one William Fitzgerald, a white man, stood on Prospect hill, and, looking down upon the rapids of Grand River, in 1754, prophesied that within another century, white men would occupy the region with their homes, and that that spot would be a center of a new civilization. Another tradition is, that as early as 1806 a French trader erected a cabin on Grand River. This was undoubtedly the



post of Laframboise, whose cabin was described by the chiefs as having been built of logs and bark, chinked with clay and about thirty feet in length. Laframboise was said to have been killed by a Pottawatamie Indian, in 1809, his death taking place somewhere between Muskegon and Grand River, on the lake shore. His wife was an Indian woman and the high esteem in which the family was held by the Indians, and the influence which they obtained, are shown in the many treaty stipulations made for the benefit of children of that name. After the death of her husband, Madame Laframboise established a trading post on the north side of Grand River, some two miles below the mouth of Flat river. Like the majority of traders, she was part of the great American Fur Company, through which John Jacob Astor accumulated his millions, and it was from this company that she bought her goods and to which she sold the furs taken in trade. She made her home at Mackinaw, returning to the Grand river each trading season, and, in 1821, she sold her trading post to Rix Robinson and retired, having accumulated a competency. She died at Mackinaw, in April, 1846.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SETTLEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

EARLY TRADERS—RIX ROBINSON—LOUIS CAMPAU—THE CAMPAUS AND DANIEL MARSAC—CATHOLIC MISSION—FATHERS BARAGA AND VICZOCZKY—TREATY OF SAGINAW—LUCIUS LYON—LUCIUS CASS—STEVENS T. MASON—THE DEXTER COLONY—ERIE CANAL—JOEL GUILD AND FAMILY—OTHER PIONEERS—MARTIN RYERSON—FIRST ELECTIONS—FIRST PLOWING—BOOM YEARS—EVENTS OF INTEREST.

(In this chapter, and others following, in quotations including proper names, for the purpose of more fully identifying those in which initials only were used by those quoted, parenthetic interpolations have been given of Christian names.—The Editor.)

That there were others and earlier traders is shown by the fact that McCoy mentioned stopping at a trader's house at the Grand Rapids post, two years before the date at which Louis Campau is supposed to have arrived. Pierre Constant, agent of the American Fur Company, is said to have established a post near the mouth of Grand River, in 1810, and Rudell, a French trader, is said to have had a post near the Indian village on the west side of the rapids of Grand River, but a few years later; nevertheless, the monument erected to the memory of Rix Robinson, and dedicated at Ada, in June, 1887, was a just recognition of the pioneer American of the Grand River valley. He was more identified with the Grand River valley, as a whole, than with Grand Rapids as a city; but no history of this region would be complete without extended mention of his life and his work in this community.

Rix Robinson was the son of Edward Robinson, and was born at Richmond, Mass., Aug. 28, 1789. During his boyhood the family removed to the State of New York and he received an excellent academic education. At nineteen he began the study of law, at Auburn, N. Y., and was admitted to the bar in 1811. This was just before the outbreak of the War of 1812, to which his father, in common with many New Englanders, was strongly opposed. Young Robinson was drafted for the army, and with the connivance of his father escaped the officers of the draft. It is related by George H. White, in his sketch of Mr. Robinson, that young Robinson purposed joining a neighbor, Samuel Phelps, who had secured an appointment as sutler with troops on the Canadian frontier. Phelps needed additional capital and Robinson's father helped Rix to secure \$1,000 for the venture. While arranging for this business drafting took place and Rix and his brother Edward were drawn. He eluded the officers by hiding in the home of his sister and escaped to the West. It is said that one reason for his continued residence in the Michigan wilderness was the heavy penalty which hung over him for this evasion of the draft. Robinson was with Phelps as sutler during the war with Great Britain, and, at the close of the war, they followed the regiment to Detroit, where it was expected payment would be made to the soldiers



and the sutlers would in turn receive the large amounts due them. The regiment was not paid, but was ordered to Mackinaw and the sutlers followed, arriving there in 1815. Detachments of the regiment were then ordered to different places and gradually became disbanded. Robinson and his partner followed the troops, in the vain hope of settlements, until they found that it would be impossible to secure their pay from the soldiers, and that not only their profits but their capital had been wiped out. During this period of wandering throughout the country in pursuit of the elusive pay-day, Robinson, who was a man of quick wit and great ability, learned much concerning the methods of Indian trading, and in his well-nigh bankrupt condition he turned to this as offering an opportunity to recoup his fortune. The first venture of this kind was in Wisconsin, in partnership with Phelps. The following spring they rendezvoused at Mackinaw, and it was found that Mr. Robinson had gained handsomely, while Mr. Phelps had been a loser. A settlement of their affairs and a dissolution of the partnership followed and Mr. Robinson determined to trade for himself. During this time he had become acquainted with John Jacob Astor, the great magnate of the American Fur Company, which was in active and bitter rivalry with the Hudson Bay Company. Traders of the American Fur Company had been driven from the post on St. Peter's River and Mr. Astor believed that Robinson combined the qualities of strength, courage, and ability to maintain himself at this post in spite of the rival company. He, therefore, made Robinson an offer, paying him a fixed sum and advancing him capital for trading purposes. The young man gladly accepted this and went to his far-western post. The Indians were hostile and refused to trade with him, carrying their furs to the distant post of the Hudson Bay Company in preference. The story is told that after many weeks of waiting without business, a hostile chief called and demanded whiskey, without offering any furs in trade. Robinson refused to furnish him the liquor, whereupon there was a brief encounter in which Robinson had entirely the best of it. Respect for Robinson's prowess made the chief his friend, and from that time on the post was a success. Becoming satisfied that there was large profit in the tobacco trade with the Indians, Robinson resigned the post with the American Fur Company and went to St. Louis, in 1819, and made sufficient at this venture to enable him to establish a post as an independent trader. His first post was on the Calumet River, in what is now South Chicago, and the following year he established a station on the Illinois River, and one at the present site of Milwaukee. The American Fur Company recognized his success and he was admitted as a limited partner to operate on the Grand, Kalamazoo, and Muskegon Rivers, with headquarters on the Grand River. The fur company already had a post at Ada, in charge of Madam La Framboise, and Robinson, who accepted the offer made him by Mr. Astor, first took over this post, buying Madam La Framboise's interests, and then establishing himself at the mouth of Grand River Valley, and he extended every possible aid and inducement to the new settlers, and was the trusted friend and adviser of Lucius Lyon and others of the courageous and hopeful men who forwarded the first enterprises in this part of Michigan. While Robinson was the chief trader on the Grand River, he



was not able to monopolize the business, and one of his competitors was Louis Campau, who came to the Grand River Valley, in 1826. He was perhaps the most lovable of the pioneers. He came of one of the most noted and highly respected French families of Detroit, where he was born in 1791. The family name is interwoven with all the history of Detroit, and that his sympathies were with the Americans was shown by the fact that he was a member of the militia surrendered by General Hull when he yielded Detroit to the British, in 1812. Following this, the young man was employed as a trader in the Saginaw region by Joseph Campau, of Detroit, and while there he served as interpreter to Governor Cass in the Indian treaty of 1819. Concerning his residence at Saginaw, and his part in this treaty, Mr. Campau testified upon the hearing of a lawsuit, in 1860, that he had resided in Saginaw four years before the treaty, trading with the Indians for Joseph Campau, his uncle; that he had a trading house in the vicinity and built a second house, in 1822, and that he also had a store. He said that he was acquainted at Detroit; that it was his custom to spend his summers in Detroit and his winters in the Saginaw district. According to his testimony, Governor Cass requested him to precede the treaty party and make suitable provision for a store-house, dining room, and council room. In describing the treaty, Mr. Campau said most of the business was at General Cass's office. There was a long table in the dining room and the private council was held there—the office and dining room were separated only by a store-house. There were four log buildings, all together, end to end. Cass arrived in the afternoon and sent his agent for the Indians to gather, the next morning, when they met at the council house. Governor Cass let the Indians know that he was sent by the Great Father to make a treaty, and that he wanted to buy their lands, and for them to go back and smoke and think about it. In three or four days he called them together again, and at this second council there was great difficulty, hard words, and the Indians threatened General Cass. A third council was held, and between nine and ten days were required for the completion of the treaty. After the treaty was made it was sundown, and the Indians all got drunk, and General Cass gave the order to be off. Mr. Campau testified at this trial that he was, at that time, well acquainted with all the head men of the tribe and understood the Chipewewa language. He said that he was a clerk for Joseph Campau before the war, and that he left for the Grand River Valley in the spring of 1826. Mr. Campau was married to a daughter of Rene Marsac, one of the earliest and best known of French families coming to New France. Captain Marsac was the commander of the French-American militia which was with Hull at Detroit, and Louis Campau was a member of his company. Campau came to the Grand River, therefore, fortified not only with experience as an Indian trader and with a knowledge of the Indian language, but connected by blood, marriage, and social ties with the best French families of the Northwest. His coming was a considerable event and he soon established himself with suitable buildings. The first winter, however, was spent with his two assistants at the Indian village, and it was in the following year that he built two log cabins—one for a dwelling and the other for a store, with a small shop for a smithy. These were of old block-



house style, built of logs, and were located by the river bank, at what was later the foot of the east side canal. For six years these were the only buildings on this side of the river. In that year he was joined by his brother, Toussaint, and it was here a few years later that the sister of his wife, Emily Marsac, came to visit in 1832. This good woman resided in the Grand River Valley for many years, dying at Big Rapids, April 25, 1893. The story of her coming is told in the Pioneer Collections as follows:

"Mrs. Toussaint Campau came to reside with her sister, Mrs. Louis Campau, riding along the Indian trail, 200 miles between Grand River and Detroit. The whole distance, until within twenty-five miles of Detroit, was through a dense wilderness, tenanted only by wild beasts and wild Indians. Her only escort were two or three courier du bois. She had no fears of harm and suffered only from the fatigue of riding the slow ambling pony and of camping out for several nights along the trail. At the house of Uncle Louis she met his youngest brother, Toussaint, who wooed and won her, and they were married on the 27th day of November, 1834, in the Catholic Mission church, across the river, situated a little west of where Chubb's foundry stood a few years ago."

This was the second marriage in the Grand River Valley and the wedding feast was attended by almost every white inhabitant and by the distinguished Indian chiefs. Later, two other brothers, Antoine and George, came to Grand Rapids and joined the little settlement. Daniel Marsac also came, in 1828, and later went to Lowell, where he established a trading post, in 1831. These French traders thus perpetuated the fame of the earliest licensed French traders—Louis Chabolier, who was licensed to transport two canoes of ammunition to the Grand River Valley, in 1778, and Pierre Chabolierre, who was licensed to proceed with one canoe to Grand River, in 1780. One of the assistants who came with Louis Campau was Samuel Hollaway, a boy of seventeen, who was, perhaps, the first Yankee mechanic employed at Grand Rapids. He remained until 1832, at which time, he said later, there were but nine log cabins on the present site of the city of Grand Rapids, these being, three at the Thomas mission, three at the Campau post, and three at the Indian village. Francis Bailey, a half-breed, came from Eastern Canada, in 1828, and lived at the Indian village, where he was a prominent medicine man. Other early travelers were Caleb Eldred, who came to investigate lands, but reported to his employer in favor of the Kalamazoo valley. Noah Osborne visited the Rapids, in 1829, and during a severe sickness was cared for at the wigwam of Chief Noonday. In writing of this, in 1888, Mr. Osborne said that he had laid down, hungry, sick, lost and discouraged, when he was startled by a footstep and an Indian stood at his side. He conducted the sick man to the chief by whom he was kindly received, given something to eat and furnished a bed of skins. He was given a decoction of herbs and remained several days, until his strength was recovered. He said that the camp or town was near the river, where there were falls or rapids. Chief Noonday furnished him with a guide to the nearest white settlement, which he believed was the present Kalamazoo.

It was doubtless the prominent French Catholics who had something to do with the establishment of the Catholic mission at Grand



Rapids. Father Frederic Baraga was one of the greatest of the later-day Catholic missionaries among the Indians. He was an Austrian, and in 1830, when 33 years of age, he came to America and devoted himself to the Indians of the Northwest. His first work was at Arbrecroche in 1831, and he first visited Grand Rapids in 1832. He made the Grand Rapids mission his headquarters, in 1833, and in sixteen months it is said that he baptized 170 Indians. In spite of opposition he soon had a church and school built, and like the Protestant missionaries, McCoy and Slater, he was violently opposed to the sale of whiskey to the Indians. This aroused not only the enmity of the traders, who wished to profit by the traffic, but of the Indians, who by this time were fatally fond of fire water, and it is said that on one night his mission cabin was surrounded by a howling mob of savages who were only prevented from injuring the priest by the strong barred door of his little home. In 1834 he was succeeded here by Father Viczoczky. The Catholic mission buildings were at the lower Indian village, but at the instance of Louis Campau, the church building was removed over the river on the ice, in the spring of 1834, by Barney Burton, and was later used for other purposes. Father Andreas Vizoczky continued to look after the interests of the Catholic Indians at Grand Rapids for some years, but the mission was abandoned at the time of the treaty of 1836.

While civilization was thus extending feeble fingers toward the Grand River Valley; while the missionaries were struggling to up-build the character of the red man, and finding it difficult to erect a structure of Indian civilization faster than the whiskey traders tore it down; while Robinson by his prowess and Campau by his friendliness were establishing themselves in the confidence of the Indians, and while such men as Lasley at Muskegon and Ferry at Grand Haven were making their names fireside words in every wigwam of the valley, great events were going forward in the history of Michigan. The Treaty of Saginaw, in 1819, added a large strip of territory in east Michigan to the lands open for settlement, and the increasing commerce of Detroit attracted more and more American settlers. A great event for Michigan was in 1818, when the Walk-in-the-Water brought steam navigation for the first time to the upper lakes. This boat made its first trip to Mackinac, in 1819, and first steamed up Lake Michigan in 1820. This alone served to bring the Grand River Valley several days nearer to the civilization of the east. In 1818, Michigan Territory, with the French population still in the majority, had voted not to have representative government under the provisions of the Ordinance of 1787, but, by the following year, Michigan population had so increased that Congress provided for the election of a delegate, and William Woodbridge, who had been Secretary of the territory and acting Governor during the absence of Governor Cass, was chosen as the first representative of Michigan in the National Congress, where he had the right of speech, but not a right to vote. Upon his resignation he was succeeded by Solomon Sibley, in 1820, and through his influence the first post-roads were established leading from Detroit to Pontiac and Mt. Clemens. Several counties were organized, and at the instance of Governor Cass an effort was made to investigate the reputed wealth of the Lake Su-



perior copper mines, which had been almost forgotten since the days of the early French missionaries. Save for the commerce at Detroit and the small settlements scattered through Southern Michigan, as far west as Pontiac, the only industry of Michigan was that of the fur trade, with its complementary barter of goods with the Indians. This trade amounted to \$1,000,000 worth of goods in 1821, and 3,000 packs of furs were exported from Mackinac. Mr. Astor, as head of the American Fur Company, which had grown to be a wealthy corporation, had much influence with Congress. He was able to secure the passage of a law forbidding foreigners to trade with the Indians in the territory of the United States and abolishing the system of trading with Indians at military posts. This restricted British competition and also opened the doors to individual traders, so that the next few years, or until game became scarce, was the very harvest time for American fur traders. Until 1823, all legislative functions for Michigan were vested in the Governor and three Territorial Judges, who were Witherell, Griffin and Woodward, the latter being the eccentric, but brainy man, to whom Michigan is indebted for the first steps towards founding its great university. Congress yielded to the desire of the people for freer and more representative government and provided for a legislative council of nine members, to be appointed by the President from a list of eighteen nominated by the vote of the people. Judge Woodward was given no place in this new form of government, and, disappointed and embittered, he returned to the East, where he lived in poverty until appointed to the Federal bench in Florida by President Monroe. He died in Florida, in 1827, but he will always be remembered as one of the most picturesque figures in early Michigan history.

In a letter, written from Detroit, Nov. 10, 1822, to a friend in his old home in the state of Vermont, one of the greatest of Michigan's pioneers said:

"But a small part of the territory is yet surveyed and I have not been able to obtain a job from the United States yet, but have a fair prospect of obtaining a district of ten townships to survey on the opening of Spring, which, at three dollars per mile, will amount to \$1,800, out of which I can save something pretty handsome."

This was the start of a life in the woods which led Lucius Lyon through all of Michigan and into Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa. Everywhere before him he saw the wonderful opportunities of the West, and as fast as he could accumulate funds he invested in different projects which his increasing knowledge of conditions and his wonderfully optimistic spirit prompted. Thus we find that, as early as 1825, he had purchased 700 acres of land at the point which Judge Woodward insisted upon calling Ypsilanti—after the Grecian prince who had shown such patriotism in the Greek cause but a few years before. Writing to his father at this time, he urges him to sell everything, except bedding, and to come to Michigan as quickly as possible. In 1828, he began a lengthy journey with Governor Cass and the great Indian scholar, Henry R. Schoolcraft, which took him as far west as Prairie du Chien, down the Mississippi river to the lead mines at Galena, and to St. Louis; returning up the Ohio river to Cincinnati, to Chilicothe, and thence to Detroit. It was on this trip that



he formed an acquaintance with Gen. William Clark, who crossed the continent with the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1805. It was in 1830, at "Great Kanawha," Virginia, that he first gained personal knowledge of the salt industry, a venture into which, at Grand Rapids, was later to cost him a large sum. In the exploration of the northern peninsula, and in the establishment of the boundaries of the State, he was one of the most prominent figures, and he not only was interested in finding investments for his own capital, but in aiding all who wished to make homes in the Northwest Territory. His work as a surveyor, explorer, and promoter, during these nine years in which he traversed the wilderness, made him the best-known man in Michigan and led to his election to Congress, in 1833. In 1831, his work as surveyor carried him as far west in Michigan as the Grand River Valley, and he surveyed what is officially known as "township seven, range twelve," while John Mullett surveyed township seven, range eleven, now including nearly all the territory of the city of Grand Rapids.

In 1831 Lewis Cass was appointed Secretary of War, under President Jackson, and John T. Mason, of Virginia, had been appointed Secretary of the Territory of Michigan. Not wishing to assume the office, Mason secured the appointment as Secretary for his son, Stevens T. Mason, and as no Governor had been appointed, he became the acting Governor of the Territory. There were loud complaints at the appointment of this youthful stranger. The Governorship was later filled by the appointment of George B. Porter, of Pennsylvania, who regarded his office largely as a political sinecure and gave it little attention, so that Stevens T. Mason was the acting Governor for the greater part of the time, from the resignation of Governor Cass until Michigan became a State. Governor Porter died, in 1834, during an epidemic of cholera which ravaged Detroit; and while President Jackson nominated Henry D. Gilpin, of Pennsylvania, to fill the vacancy, the Senate failed to confirm him, and Acting Governor Mason continued as the chief executive of Michigan. The bonds of friendship between him and Lucius Lyon were very strong and young Mason disappointed his critics and proved himself to be an able governor and intensely loyal to the interests of Michigan. He has been accorded tardy recognition as one of the great men in this formative period of Michigan history.

By 1831, Kent County had a place on the map and had been given a name, although the lands owned by the United States and open to settlement extended only to the south bank of the Grand River. Louis Campau, who was on the spot when the government surveys were made, and who had the intelligence to realize that this was a favorable location for a larger settlement, was the first to enter land at Grand Rapids. This tract is described by Baxter as being "now bounded by Bridge street on the north, Division street on the east, Fulton street on the south, and the river on the west." This he soon had platted as the "Village of Grand Rapids." Lucius Lyon, having surveyed in this vicinity, and being ever on the lookout for opportunities for investment, formed a company with Eurotus P. Hastings and Henry L. Ellsworth, and on Sept. 25, 1832, entered a tract north and south of the Campau tract and had it entered as the 'Village of



Kent." The next entry was that of Samuel Dexter, who entered four fractional eighty-acre tracts on the east side of what is now Division street.

Lyon at this time devoted much personal attention to his interests in the lead-mining district of Illinois, and it was while he was there that he was nominated for Congress on the Democratic ticket in opposition to Augustus E. Wing; and, to the surprise of all, on account of his extended and favorable acquaintance, Mr. Lyon was elected. This had much to do with the early advancement of Grand Rapids, for Mr. Lyon had large interests here and on account of his influential position was able to direct attention to this point. There was much rivalry between Campau and Lyon in the early days, and each did his utmost to secure the upbuilding of the particular tract in which he was interested. There was, however, but little addition to the population until the coming of what will always be known in the history of the Grand River Valley as the "Dexter Colony." The law by which Kent County was established was enacted by the Legislative Council of Michigan, March 2, 1831. The boundaries were as follows: West of the line between ranges eight and nine, east of the line between ranges twelve and thirteen west, south of the line between townships eight and nine, and north of the line between townships four and five, containing sixteen townships, to be set off into a separate county by the name of Kent, in honor of Chancellor Kent, New York jurist, who was born in 1763, and died in 1817. This county was to be organized and its inhabitants "Entitled to all rights and privileges of other counties." All matters at law, however, were to be settled in Kalamazoo County and all taxes paid as if the act had not passed. The year 1832 saw the erection of the first sawmill at Grand Rapids, on Indian Mill Creek, near the north line of the city. This was built at government expense by Gideon H. Gordon, as an adjunct to the Thomas mission, and was capable of cutting from five to eight hundred feet of boards per day, when the water power permitted, and at this mill was sawed the lumber for buildings at both the Baptist and Catholic missions. The postoffice at Grand Rapids was also established in this year, with Rev. Leonard Slater as postmaster. The office was at the mission station on the west bank of the river, a few rods south of Bridge street.

Late in the year 1832, Samuel Dexter, of Herkimer county, New York, heard of the wonders of the Michigan peninsula, and, journeying from Detroit, inspected the lands lying along the Grand River Valley. He chose a location at what is now the city of Ionia and also entered the four tracts before mentioned at Grand Rapids. Returning to his native state, with glowing accounts of the advantages of the valley, he was soon able to secure the interest of his neighbors and, on April 22, 1833, the families of Erastus Yeomans, Oliver Arnold, and Samuel Dexter set forth to conquer the West. They started in a canal boat, which they had fitted up during the previous winter to accommodate their families and household goods on the journey to Buffalo.

Right here it is proper to note that one of the greatest influences in the settlement of Michigan was the completion of the Erie Canal, in 1825. This work was a credit to any state or nation and was an



undertaking of as much magnitude, in that day, as the building of the Panama Canal was in this century. Before that time the settlement of the West had progressed by Prairie Schooner, gradually extending westward from Ohio, or down the Ohio river, and up and down the Mississippi. The Erie Canal opened a new route by which, with comparative comfort and little expense, the ambitious homeseeking young men and women of New England and York State had access to the great Northwest. They went by the canal to Buffalo, thence by boat to Detroit, and thus their attention was directed at once to the Territory of Michigan, and a great flood of immigrants from the New England states was diverted to this region. It was for this reason that a very large percentage of the early settlers of Western Michigan had formerly dwelt in the State of New York, and were either natives of the State or of New England origin.

Mrs. Prudence Tower, a daughter of Samuel Dexter, in Volume 28 of the Pioneer Collections, tells the story of the journey of the Dexter Colony as follows: "We started from Frankfort village, Herkimer county, New York, April 22, 1833, with three families, Mr. Yeoman's, Oliver Arnold's, and Samuel Dexter's—using their own horses to draw the boat, which was named 'Walk-in-the-Water,' but some one wrote on the side of the boat with chalk, 'Michigan Caravan.' At Utica, Joel Guild and his brother Edward and families embarked with us. We traveled by day and at night had to go ashore to sleep at hotels. At Syracuse, Mr. Darius Winsor and family joined the party. The boat was a motley sight, as the dock was piled with wagons taken to pieces and bound on, and every conceivable thing that could be taken to use in such a country where there was nothing to be bought. From Buffalo to Detroit we came by steamer Superior. Here we procured oxen and cows and cooked provisions and started on our journey through the wilderness. On leaving Detroit the party consisted of sixty-three people, and on the first day but seven miles were made."

In a few days after this party arrived at Ionia, Joel Guild and Mr. Dexter started from that place on horseback, by way of the Rapids of Grand River, for the land office at White Pigeon. On reaching the Rapids they met "Uncle" Louis Campau, who wanted them to settle there, the lands having come into market the year before. He had taken some land and was platting it into lots; he did not "talk Yankee" very well, he said, and he wanted a settlement of Yankees there. So Mr. Guild took up the forty that was afterwards known as the "Kendall Addition," and also purchased some pine land a little southeast of there. When he came back from the land office, he bought, for \$25, each, two village lots of Mr. Campau. Uncle Louis and some of his French help went to Ionia in bateaux for the family. At the mouth of Flat River they went ashore. Dan Marsac was there, in a log shanty. There was no clearing. Many Indians were about. They next landed at Rix Robinson's and found Indians there also. Soon afterward some Indians met them, and Uncle Louis talked with them in their own language. He said they informed him that a Catholic priest, Mr. Baraga, had just arrived. They reached the Rapids and landed that evening on the east side by the foot of Huron street, near where the Butterworth & Lowe Iron Works were afterward located.



Two log houses and a shop were there and all about were woods. They were received with warm welcome by that good woman, Mrs. Louis Campau, who did her utmost to make them comfortable. This was Sunday, June 23, 1833. They stayed there a few days and then removed to Mr. Campau's fur packing house and store, where the Guild family lived till about the first of September, when they removed into the new house that Mr. Guild had built. It is with the family of Joel Guild that the history of Grand Rapids is very largely concerned as he was the only one of the Dexter colony who at once settled in this vicinity. The family consisted of himself and wife, and six daughters, and a son, and Harriet was the eldest child. As heretofore stated, the family first found lodgement with the hospitable Louis Campau and his wife, and Mr. Guild bought lots at the foot of Prospect Hill and immediately started the erection of the first frame house in Grand Rapids. This was 16x26 feet, story-and-a-half structure, and was on the site later and now occupied by the National City Bank. Much of the household work was done out of doors, near a spring not far from the river's edge, an oak log serving for backing to the out-of-door fireplace, with crane and hangers of wood and large bake-ovens of tin. Numbers of settlers and prospecters were attracted to the Grand River during this year, and perforce the little frame house became a tavern. Six months after coming to the place, Joel Guild wrote to his brother in New York, concerning the new home, as follows: "After looking about for a home, I thought best to move about fifty miles down Grand River to a place called Grand River Falls. I landed here on the thirteenth day of June—no one here then that could speak English, excepting a French trader by the name of Campau. I bought 120 acres of first-rate land near this place, and since I bought I have had the satisfaction of going with the Commissioners and sticking the stake for the Court House in our county within twenty-five rods of my land. Direct your letters to Grand Rapids, county of Kent, Michigan. We have a post office here by the name of Grand Rapids."

The location of the county seat, spoken of by Mr. Guild, was made by James Kingsley, S. V. R. Trowbridge, and Charles Lanman, commissioners appointed by the Governor under the act by which Kent County was created. This location was made, Nov. 8, 1833, and the stake was set near the center of what was later known as the Fulton Street Park.

Among the adult male members of the Dexter colony not previously mentioned, were Dr. W. B. Lincoln, the first physician in the Grand River Valley; Zenas Winsor, son of Darius; Patrick M. Fox, and M. Decker. Samuel Dexter lived to be the respected head of the Ionia colony for many years, but was never largely identified with Grand Rapids. Darius Winsor removed to Grand Rapids within a few years after coming to Michigan and was the second postmaster in the village. Under the old system of laws he had been imprisoned for debt in New York State and it was largely through the efforts of his son Zenas that he was released and enabled to make the journey to the new country, to regain his fortune. He was the first to bring goods by pole boats from the mouth of the Grand River. He died in Grand Rapids in 1855. His son, Zenas G., played an important part in the early history of the valley. He was nearly thirty years of age



upon his arrival in Michigan and at once sought employment. He acted as an axe-man, when the county seat was located at Grand Rapids, and drove the stake which was to mark the site of the new Court House. He entered the employ of Rix Robinson, at the Grand Haven station, and became popular with the Indians, who gave him the name of Che-mo-kee-mames, or Young Englishman, and later he was known as No-ba-quon, which was the Indian word for ship. He did not make Grand Rapids his home, however, until 1835, when he conducted a store at the corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets, with Rix Robinson as his backer; though this venture was not a success. Jacob W. Winsor, also a son of Darius, entered the Indian trade soon after coming to Ionia and learned to speak the Indian language fluently, but he also was not identified with Grand Rapids until a few years later.

Among the other pioneers of this year were Eliphalet H. Turner, who became the first clerk of Grand Rapids township; and Ira Jones, Josiah Burton, Elijah Grant, Arthur Bronson, Walter Sprague, A. S. Wadsworth, and Henry L. Ellsworth. Another settler who was well known as a friend of every one in the Grand River Valley was 'Yankee' Lewis, the famous tavern keeper of Yankee Springs. He located in the edge of the oak openings, on the line that had been traveled by the very few who before then had come to the Rapids by the south route. It was on the great Indian trail which had branched from the Detroit and Chicago Indian trail and led to the Rapids and from there to the Traverse region and Mackinac. Along this trail Pontiac, Tecumseh, the Prophet, and lesser Indian chiefs and braves had traveled. Lewis' brother first located in Michigan in a log house without floors, doors, or windows. "Yankee" thought the location good, if the talk of the Grand River Valley should amount to anything, with its cheap ten-shilling-an-acre land, and he bought his brother's interest, returning to Detroit and sending supplies by water, using pole boats from the mouth of the Grand River to what is now Grand Rapids and from that point to his farm tavern by horseback. This place was noted for its wonderful garden and hospitable good cheer, and was known to and was visited by almost every settler in Western Michigan. There was established a weekly horseback mail from Battle Creek to Grand Rapids and, when the contractor gave this up, Lewis and John Withey continued it, putting heavy spring canvas-covered wagons on the route, even though the business did not pay. These wagons had openings at the side, opposite each seat, which seats were cushioned with sheep's pelts, wool-side up. There was no road, except a short distance north of Battle Creek. The inrush of settlers in the following years caused this tavern to grow until there were in all seven buildings, which Yankee Lewis humorously described "as his seven-story hotel, all on the ground floor."

There were no whites living on the Grand River, in 1833, except at Ionia, Grand Rapids, Grandville and Grand Haven. Antoine Cannell, employed by Campau, was the first blacksmith and A. D. Stout was the next outside of the mission. His first work in the little shop, at the foot of Pearl street, was to fashion a fish spear for the Indians. In Paris township the Guilds, Barney Burton, and James Pool entered land, Burton's tract being 340 acres, one-half mile south of the old fair grounds—Burton street is a reminder of it. The first plowing in the



county was done by Luther Lincoln and in the year 1833, several of the pioneers broke ground in Grand Rapids, Wyoming and Paris townships. In this year, also, Mr. Campau built the pole boat, "Young Napoleon," and added some buildings to his trading post. To the Indian mill, with its old sash saw of the flutter-wheel variety he added a cheap run of stones, which proved a great help to the community as there was no other mill nearer than Gull Prairie. These stones John Ball afterwards secured and used as a horse block in front of his residence for many years, and they are now to be seen in front of the Public Museum at Grand Rapids. Thus it will be seen that by the close of the year 1833 great impetus had been given to the settlement of the valley, and the nucleus for a village had been formed at Grand Rapids. Others who should be mentioned as coming in this year are Louis Moran, who came as a clerk for Louis Campau, then ran a tavern on the Thornapple river and later returned to Grand Rapids, where he established the Eagle Hotel; Orson A. Withey, who was but seventeen years of age, and who was one of the first brick-makers of the valley, and Noah P. Roberts, the pioneer farmer on the west side of the river. Further impetus was given to the settlement of Western Michigan by further cessions by the Indians. The year 1833 was, therefore, the initial year of the settlement of Grand Rapids by what may be called the American population, as distinct from the Indian traders and the missionaries. Through the efforts of Lucius Lyon, who had been elected to Congress, the first petition for the admission of Michigan as a State was presented to Congress initiating the long fight as to the southern boundary, in which the harbor at Toledo and a strip of land west to the Indian line was in question, and which was ultimately settled in favor of the State of Ohio, but with Michigan receiving the great Upper Peninsula, the value of which was greatly underestimated by all, with the possible exception of Mr. Lyon. In addition to those who remained at Grand Rapids and vicinity there had been many land-seekers and explorers, a number of whom returned to their Eastern homes, but became residents of Grand River Valley at later dates. With so few neighbors, distances did not count and the whole valley was practically one colony with interests much in common, from Ionia to Grand Haven. Thus such a man as Martin Ryerson, who had been prospecting in Michigan since 1825, and who is said to have visited this region in 1826, and in 1833 was an employee of Rev. W. M. Ferry, at Grand Haven, was well known at Grand Rapids and practically accounted as one of its citizens. Others who were here at the beginning of the year 1834 were W. M. R. Godwin, Josiah Burton, Warner Dexter, Myron Roys, Henry West, J. R. Copeland, J. Archibald, and Jonathan F. Chubb, while Steven and Daniel Tucker had located at Grandville, not far from Luther Lincoln.

In passing, it would be well to say a few words of Mr. Ryerson, who was one of the first to realize the large possibilities of the lumber trade. Eight years in Michigan woods as a "timber cruiser," had made him familiar with the forestry, of which Hon. C. W. Garfield said: "There is probably no area on the earth's surface of the size of our southern peninsula of Michigan that has contained such a wide range of trees in its forest growth. No wonder that the early Catholic

pioneer voyagers mentioned the beauty of this peninsula; no wonder that Cadillac emphasized the wealth there was in the Michigan forest. That was a wondrous growth of pine, not equalled by any country in the world, that we had in a belt across Michigan." Mr. Ryerson was in the employ of Louis Campau and Richard Godfry at different times, and as a young man he married, with Indian rites, a young woman of the Ottawa tribe. She died, but left him a daughter, whose birth was later legitimized by special act of the State Legislature. Entering the employ of Mr. Ferry, Mr. Ryerson married the daughter of Pierce C. Duverney, of Grand Haven, and his Indian wife. Her life also was brief, and Mr. Ryerson later married a daughter of Antoine Campau. Mr. Ryerson's great wealth came from the timber of Michigan at a later day, but at this time he was one of the poor but enterprising young men whose energy was to aid in the development of the Grand River Valley.

Thus, with the opening of 1834, Grand Rapids was ready to enter into the second phase of its existence, and, by March 7, there was sufficient population so that Kent township was organized, to include all of Kent County then ceded to the United States, which was that part south of Grand River. The first meeting for the political organization of the township was held on April 14, and there were but nine voters present. The pioneer, Rix Robinson, was chosen Moderator, and Jonathan F. Chubb acted as Secretary. There were enough offices to go around, and in fact some of the voters were honored with two official positions. The officers elected were as follows: Eliphalet H. Turner, clerk; Rix Robinson, supervisor; Barney Burton and Joel Guild, assessors; Ira Jones, collector; Luther Lincoln, poor master; Ira Jones and Myron Roys constables; Jonathan F. Chubb, overseer of highways; and Gideon H. Gordon, Jonathan F. Chubb, and Luther Lincoln fence viewers; it having been voted that a fence five feet high and a distance between rails of three feet and six inches should be a lawful fence. Leonard Slater, as Justice of the Peace, administered the oath to Clerk Turner, who in turn swore in the other officers, with the exception of Luther Lincoln, who, as a Quaker, simply affirmed. There is no record that any matters of great importance were transacted by this elaborate village government, and while there was a steady growth, the developments were not startling.

The first plowing on the site of Grand Rapids took place in the spring of this year; Joseph S. Potter began the construction of the first hotel, which succeeded the Guild Tavern, and was known as the Eagle House. Mr. Potter began the work of building this hotel, but it was finished by Louis Campau. This was built on Market street, where its successor, the modern Eagle Hotel, now stands. What was known as the "Old Yellow Warehouse" was built by Richard Godfroy. This was first built on the west side of the river, but was moved across on the ice, in the spring of 1834, and located on the east bank, not far from the Eagle Hotel. Other buildings, in 1834, were a log house on the east side of Division street, built by Josiah Burton; a store building by Louis Campau for the Indian trade, near the river banks on Pearl street; a dwelling, also built by Campau, at the corner of Monroe and Market; a store on the east corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets for the use of Zenas G. Winsor, who was backed by Rix



Robinson. The Red Warehouse, another Campau structure, located near the Yellow Warehouse; and the dwelling of Mr. Winsor, on the corner of Fountain and Ottawa streets, practically completed the list of buildings for that year. The winter was noted for its severity, and teams were able to cross the river on the ice, late in March, while during the remainder of the year passage was largely by canoe, and an extremely temporary foot bridge was erected. The canoe and the pirogue were still the chief means of river transportation, and it is reported that Giles D. Slocum paddled down the Grand River in a canoe, from Jackson to Grand Rapids. Among the visitors at Grand Rapids was Bilius Stocking, whose name is commemorated in a West Side street, who came on foot from Kalamazoo to view the country. He saw that the valley was good and continued with the same vehicle of travel, to St. Joseph and Chicago, only to return to Grand Rapids as a rail splitter, two years later. Another arrival was Hiram Jennison, who located at Grandville and began Michigan life as an axeman in the woods. Of importance to the community was the arrival of Ezra, Lewis, and Porter Reed, in honor of whom Reed's Lake is named. They settled on section 33, Grand Rapids township, and soon had a settlement which almost rivaled Grand Rapids. That Grand Rapids was becoming a settled community is shown by the fact that 1834 witnessed the first marriages and the first births among the new settlers. The first wedding was that of Barney Burton, a young farmer of Paris township, and Harriet Guild, daughter of Joel Guild, whose coming with the Dexter Colony has already been told. This ceremony was performed by Rev. Leonard Slater, on April 13. The second wedding was that of Toussaint Campau and Emily Marsac, Nov. 27, 1834, and the third wedding took place, March 13, 1835, with Asa Fuller and Susan Dwinell as the contracting parties. It is generally conceded that Eugene Winsor, yet living as this is written in 1918, whose parents came with the Dexter Colony, was the first white child born in the Grand River Valley, with the exception of the Slater children. The first birth at Grand Rapids was that of Therese Carnell, on June 21, 1834. She was a daughter of Antoine, who came to Grand Rapids in 1833 as a blacksmith, in the employ of Louis Campau. It is related of the first bridegroom, Barney Burton, that he came to the Grand River Valley overland from Ypsilanti with three hired men, and the outfit consisted of a wagonload of provisions, a horse, a cow, and five yoke of oxen. Becoming separated from his men while in search of his horse, which had wandered off, Burton was lost in the woods and it was not until the third day that he found himself at the home of Rix Robinson, at Ada. The fact that he was lost had been reported by his men and had caused much excitement, Louis Campau sending Indians with provisions in search of him. He immediately set to work, clearing a farm, and it was at the Guild Tavern that he met, wooed and won his pioneer bride. Another important development was the erection of the second saw-mill at Grand Rapids. This was commenced by Luther Lincoln, but was completed by Abraham S. Wadsworth. It was on the east bank of the river and the power was furnished by a low dam, built from the head of what was called Island No. 1. It had an over-shot wheel and an upright saw. The output of this mill was not large and it was de-



stroyed by the high water of 1838. Three other saw-mills were erected in this year in the township of Wyoming, just south of the city, and a first attempt was made to use the inexhaustible supply of superior limestone found in the valley. W. McCausland built and operated the first lime-kiln in the county. This was erected near the foot of Huron street, on the river bank just below Campau's post. Abraham S. Wadsworth, who caused the second saw-mill at Grand Rapids to be built, was an Eastern capitalist, who bought land both at Grand Rapids and at Grand Haven. He was a visionary character and did not make a success of the undertaking here. By the end of 1834, Grand Rapids had established itself with a name, a village organization, the beginnings of different industries, competition in merchandising, and had become known as one of the most promising settlements of West Michigan. It was now ripe for the boom days of the following two years, with the great activities inaugurated by Lucius Lyon and the inrush of many settlers.

The year 1835 was the first of the boom years at Grand Rapids. The first Constitutional convention was called at Detroit, and at this time Lucius Lyon and John Norvell were elected as the first United States Senators from Michigan. Their position was equivocal, as Michigan was not recognized as a State by Congress, and they were not admitted as members of the Senate. The question of the south boundary was the main one at issue. This struggle has no particular part in the history of Grand Rapids, but it was at this time that Lucius Lyon, who owned one-third of the town-site of Bronson (Kalamazoo), and all of the site of the town which he named Schoolcraft, in honor of the northern peninsula explorer, became more actively interested in Grand Rapids. He formed a company, as has been already mentioned, and through his agency N. O. Sargeant came with a gang of the first Irishmen known to the county, to dig a canal to utilize the water power of Grand Rapids. This was a great day for the new settlement. Alanson Cranson was the bugler who led the little army of workmen, and it is said that the Indians thought this was a war-like invasion and proffered their help to Louis Campau to drive out the intruders.

The interest which Mr. Lyon took in Grand Rapids at this time is shown by his letters to his sister Lucretia, then in Vermont. He wrote from Kalamazoo, in October, 1835, as follows: "I am constructing, or rather paying one-half the expense of constructing, a canal, sixty feet wide on the water line, five feet deep from the surface of the water of the dam and about a mile and a fourth in length, around the rapids of Grand River, where I own a part of the land. It is intended to furnish an excellent water power and also to facilitate the passage of steam-boats up and down the river, and will cost about \$8,000. I have, besides, negotiations to pay \$1,000 toward building a steam-boat to run on the Grand River next summer."

A few days later he wrote to Arthur Bronson, of New York: "N. O. Sargeant has with him an excellent engineer and about fifty men who are prosecuting the work on the canal, around the falls of Grand River, vigorously, and will probably have the excavations nearly completed before winter sets in. The expense of the excavation alone is estimated at \$5,000 (herewith inclosed a rough and im-



perfect diagram of the canal and lines adjacent and drawn by John Almy, the engineer, from which you will be able to form a tolerably correct notion of the situation of the place and works). The length of the canal as at present projected is something over a mile. It now is intended to terminate above the mill which you see laid down, but as soon as we make any satisfactory arrangement with Mr. Campau, who is a jealous, selfish, and troublesome Frenchman, we design to construct a dam across from the lower end of the islands of his land. I allude to the foot of the two upper islands. To this point steam-boats of light draught can at all times come up, and if we should not succeed in making an arrangement with him we shall excavate a channel between or around the islands to our work. The whole fall below the mill dam in low water is about three feet—in high water, nothing. This dam, with a saw-mill and about a third of an acre of ground where the mill stands, Mr. Sargeant and myself have lately purchased from Wadsworth, Frost and James H. Hatch, of your city, for \$5,500. We deem it better to buy than to have a law-suit with Wadsworth, who, by raising his dam near our line, had flowed the water about three and a half feet deep in front of our land. Beside, I think the property can easily be made to pay double the interest on the money. \* \* \* We mean to excavate a tail race along the margin of the river above, so as to use the water from the canal under a head of twelve feet, all of the way along the bank from the place marked 'first privilege' down to the lower lock, as the canal is 60 feet wide on the water line and the water in it at its lowest stage will never be less than four feet deep. This will afford sites and power for a great many mills, as there is an inexhaustible quantity of pine up the river on the north side, and an excellent grain growing country on the south; a great many will be needed. Nearly all the water power will be used on the fraction owned jointly and wholly by you and myself. We also own an undivided third part of the long fraction of 135 acres above it and a third of the fraction of 48 acres below Campau's. N. O. Sargeant owns the other two-thirds of the last named fractions, or rather did own them, but his partners were reluctant to make the improvements which we are now doing unless they have a joint and equal interest in the whole. Please advise me whether you consent to this.

"Mr. Almy has concluded to wait till the leaves fall before he finishes the survey of the village plat, and that is the reason I do not send you a more complete map. In the winter he is to superintend the building of a steam-boat at the rapids to run on the river. I have agreed to take \$500, and we hope you will subscribe that sum or more. The boat will cost about \$6,000. Another such boat must be built next year to form a daily line with stages from Detroit across the peninsula. \* \* \*

"P. S.: I had forgotten to mention that we design to erect next spring a large and commodious public house on the corner where the site is marked in pencil on the north side of the 100-foot street leading down to the canal. Such a house is much needed. I ought also to inform you that the wife of Louis Campau, Jr., of whom I purchased the fraction which we own together, has never relinquished her right of dower in said land and refuses to do so. I am about to commence

suit to compel her husband to perform the covenant in his deed to me."

The above indicates the extent of the improvements planned by Mr. Lyon, and also the bitter feeling which then existed between the "Kent Company" and the Campau interest, who had platted Grand Rapids. A few days later, Mr. Lyon wrote to Arthur Bronson as to the advisability of erecting a saw-mill near the mouth of the Thornapple river, and, still later, he said, writing again to Mr. Bronson:

"The canal we are constructing is the first ever made in Michigan and is turning public attention a good deal to this point. When it is completed, and a good public house and two or three mills erected, our town lots will be in demand. You will recollect when I first saw you I was confident that lands at the Rapids, at the mouth of the Thornapple, and at the mouth of the Maple river, would some day be valuable."

Mr. Bronson did not agree to Mr. Lyon's plans for the improvements at Grand Rapids, and, in December, Lyon wrote to N. O. Sargeant, from Washington, saying that Bronson did not assent to the agreement and that he had bought all of his interest at Grand Rapids for \$2,100.

While these improvements were being inaugurated by the Kent Company, the little colony at Grand Rapids was interested in its own affairs. The last of March, 1835, the highway commissioners reported that they were in debt for two and a half days work done by Rix Robinson, that the "commute money" had been expended for labor, and that the assessment had amounted to 320½ days work, of which 174 were paid in labor, 109 commuted, and the balance uncollected. There were three highway districts reported, covering the territory between the river and Plaster Creek, and thence to the neighborhood of the Thornapple river. The new American settlers inherited a fondness for politics from their New England forbears, and there was a large turnout at the special election held for the purpose of choosing delegates to the State Constitutional convention. The vote was as follows: Lucius Lyon, 11; Lyman J. Daniels, 41; Lovell Moore, 40; William H. Welsh, 32; Joseph Miller, 12; Hezekiah G. Wells, 21; Isaac Burns, 21. For the first time also the residents of Grand Rapids enjoyed the privilege of voting for county officers, but these were for Kalamazoo county. The first Monday in April, also, they voted for town officials, electing Darius Winsor clerk, and Lewis Reed, Luther Beebe, Darius Winsor, and Richard Godfroy as justices, while Rix Robinson was re-elected as supervisor, going on foot to serve his constituents at Kalamazoo. The first school district was also established, in May of this year, with boundaries described as follows: Commencing at the southwest corner of fractional section 34, town 7, range 12, thence east to the southeast corner of section 31, town 7, range 11, thence north to the northeast corner of section 7, town 7, range 11, thence west to Grand River. This included all the city limits on the east side of the river. Following this, the first tax for school purposes was levied. The first school, outside of the mission schools, was established at this time. Miss Emily Guild, afterward Mrs. Albert Baxter, conducted school in the Yellow Warehouse, exclusively for white children. The pupils were Olive and Elvira E. Guild, Maria, Phoebe, Marion and Peter Clark, and Louisa, Marion, Erastus and



Austin Guild. A school was also established at Reed's Lake, in the upper part of a log house, with Euphemia Davis and Sophia Reed as teachers, and what was probably the first school house in the county was built near Reed's Lake, in 1835, with Francis Prescott as the first man teacher in the county. Later, in 1835, Miss Day, who had been employed at the Slater Mission, opened a school in Grand Rapids in the upstairs of the new residence erected by Darius Winsor, who had recently moved to Grand Rapids from Ionia. This school existed about three months.

It is stated that Dr. Jason Winslow, of Gull Prairie, who was called by Richard Godfroy, on Jan. 18, 1835, to set a dislocated hip of Joel Guild, was the first physician to practice his calling at Grand Rapids. The first regular physician to locate was Stephen A. Wilson. Like the Dexters, he came from Herkimer county, New York, and was a graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, at Fairview. He was impoverished when he reached Grand Rapids, but through the kind offices of Louis Campau was enabled to buy instruments and a small stock of medicines. He formed a partnership with Dr. Charles Shepard, in 1837, and his career was ended by his untimely death, in 1839. Dr. Shepard, also of Herkimer county, New York, and a graduate of the same school as Dr. Wilson, was the second resident physician, coming Oct. 20, 1835, residing in Grand Rapids until his death, March 8, 1893, and becoming one of the important factors in the community. His first call is said to have been to Ada, where he vaccinated 150 Indians and he earned his first notoriety as a surgeon, in 1837, by successfully operating on the badly frozen sailors who were wrecked near the mouth of the Muskegon river.

The first funeral in Grand Rapids took place in 1835, when George Sizer was killed by an Indian who mistook him for a deer; and this year was also marked by the formation of the Grand River Methodist mission, with Rev. Osbond Monette as circuit rider and Rev. Henry Colclazer as presiding elder. The preaching stations were at Portland, Ionia, Grandville, Grand Rapids, and Grand Haven, and the members at Grand Rapids were Mehitable Stone, William C. Davidson and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Knowlton S. Pettibone, and Mrs. Eliphalet H. Turner. The meetings were held at the home of Henry Stone, on Kent street. This was the first Protestant organization outside of the Baptist mission. Among the newcomers of this year was John Almy, who came as engineer with N. O. Sargeant and who became one of the most prominent residents of the village.

There was also William G. Henry, who first came to Michigan from Bennington, Vt., as an agent for the Vermontville Colony, with S. S. Church and W. J. Squier; but Mr. Henry did not join the colony, selecting Grand Rapids as his home and establishing a general store on Monroe street. He was one of the founders of the Congregational Church, and his daughter was married to Gov. Russel A. Alger, well known to Michigan history.

Myron Hinsdill came to Grand Rapids in this year. He was from Hinesburgh, Vt., and settled first at Gull Prairie. His daughter, Mrs. S. L. Withey, said of the coming of the family to Grand Rapids:

"The winter of 1835, father made a trip on horseback to the



Grand River country. Here, the spring before, Hiram Hinsdill had come with his family. Father seemed to have been captivated by the prospect; the fine rapids, the river, and the high hills seemed more like his old New England home, and he fancied it would be more healthy. Accordingly, he let his farm and started for Grand Rapids. This journey was made through the woods by blazed trees; no sign of a road, and took several days. On the way, as we were stopping for the night where we found a log house without roof or floor, the first stage passed us with George Coggeshall and family, bound for the same haven. Temporarily we staid at Hinsdill's till the building known as the "Old National Hotel," which father had purchased of him, could be made habitable. Our first move was to a new barn, just in the rear of the new house, for, be it remembered, just as fast as people could find a place to shelter they must make way for later comers. As soon as a few rooms neared completion we moved in the "Old National Hotel," although it was first called Hinsdill's Hotel."

The first home of Hiram Hinsdill to which reference is made in the above, was a log house on Pearl street, built in 1835. Another arrival was Maxime Ringuette, who was followed the next year by his brother, John. They were shoemakers and were of French Canadian origin. It is related of Maxime that, in 1834, he walked from Quebec to Detroit and went by pony to Ionia, and there traded his pony for a canoe, by which he came to Grand Rapids and was the first to engage in the trade of a shoemaker in the new settlement.

This was also the year of the coming of Judge Jefferson Morrison. He was born in New York, in 1805, and his earliest experience was in the tanning trade. This business brought him to Detroit, and in 1834 he was appointed inspector of leather for Wayne county, by Gov. George B. Porter, and in 1836 he was commissioned as a justice of the peace for Kalamazoo County, which then included Kent County, my Gov. Stevens T. Mason. The same spring he came to Grand Rapids and established the first general store opened at what is now Campau Square. He soon gained the confidence of the Indians, by whom he was called Poc-to-go-nin-ne, which means "Man-of-the-Rapids." In 1836, he brought his wife with him from Detroit, coming from the Thornapple river in a canoe, which capsized and his wife was barely rescued. He also became prominent in the later history of the city, Wealthy street being named in honor of his wife, and Jefferson and Morrison streets also being named for him.

Thomas D. Gilbert also saw Grand Rapids for the first time, in 1834, and of his coming he said in a paper read before the Pioneer Society and published in Volume 17 of the Pioneer Collections: "At the time of my arrival in this favored region, the western half of Michigan, from the St. Joseph river to the Straits of Mackinac, was an almost unbroken wilderness. A small village at Bronson, now Kalamazoo; a few families in and around Grand Rapids, Ionia, Grand Haven and Saugatuck, constituted the white population in the territory lying between the Grand and St. Joseph rivers, while the whole region between Grand river and the straits, a distance of 225 miles, belonged to the Indians and was an unknown land except to the few Indian traders, like Rix Robinson, Louis Campau and William Lasley



(venerated names in all that region), who had operated there many years. Early in the period of which I have spoken, it was known that salt could be found in the vicinity of Grand Rapids, and the gypsum beds in and near that city were developed, and everyone knew that there must ultimately be great wealth in the vast forests of pine and other timber that covered the whole region. As early as 1835 there were two small saw-mills near Grand Rapids that sufficed to meet all demands. The contrast between the primitive mill of that day, when the sawyer might start his saw and go to dinner, well assured that it would not get through the lumber before his return, and the modern circular saw that requires twenty men to feed and care for the lumber, forcibly illustrates the progress of the time in that business."

Still another picture of the conditions and those times is given by Mrs. Marion White, in Volume 30, of the Pioneer Collections. In this she says: "From Middleville to Ada, the direct route to Grand Rapids was a dense forest, an unbroken wilderness, without an inhabitant. We were on the direct line (at Yankee Springs) of the great Indian trail running from Detroit to Grand Rapids, which passed directly through Barry County, but we were not long alone. The fur trader and the speculator were abroad in the land, and to fill the increasing demands of the weary traveler our little cottage of two rooms was extended, building after building, until we occupied 'nine stories on the ground,' seven distinct buildings in a row in the front and two additional in the back.

"The extreme ends of the old house were named. The one farthest south was 'Kalamazoo,' and the one farthest north was 'Grand Rapids.' The Kalamazoo was considered the 'best room' and was furnished rather better than the others, and the better class of people occupied it, generally bridal parties, etc.

"The man without money was treated as well as the man whose pocket bulged with the currency of that day. Ministers of all denominations, irrespective of creed, were entertained free of charge, but were expected to hold an evening service in our large dining-room, and men were sent out to notify the neighbors to that effect. The first Episcopal service I ever heard was rendered there by Dr. Francis Cuming, who was journeying to Grand Rapids to settle over St. Mark's church in that city.

"We were in very close touch with the people at Grand Rapids in the early days and visited often in their families. Much of our trading was done there and although thirty-eight miles distant from us, we made frequent journeys there. I remember seeing Louis Campau and Rix Robinson—those grand pioneers—the earliest.

"There was a period when the Yankee Springs property was considered very valuable and the Rathbones, in Grand Rapids, wished to exchange their hotel property for our own, we to retain the farm lands. This Grand Rapids property is now worth several hundred thousand dollars, and is the present location of the Widdicomb Building, corner of Monroe and Market streets."

By the end of the year 1835, the population of Grand Rapids was estimated at between seventy and one hundred, and the population in the county outside of Grand Rapids was between twenty-five and

fifty. Louis Campau had platted that portion of the town which he had pre-empted and wisely planned to take advantage of the new commercial activities. The Kent company had been formed, and N. O. Sargeant had arrived with his band of workers to dig the canal, as planned by Lucius Lyon; John Almy was platting the Kent Company land, to be called the village of Kent, and considerable bitterness had arisen between the Campau and the Lyon interests. Joel Guild was by this time an "old settler," and, as deputy postmaster, performed the duties of that office for Mr. Slater. The Indians outnumbered the white population more than ten to one, and settlement was retarded by the fact that the vast territory north of the Grand River was still owned by the Indians, so that no white man could gain clear title to any of that land.

The year 1836 was filled with events of interest to the Grand River Valley, to Michigan, and to the United States. Andrew Jackson, as President, had secured the defeat of the renewal of the charter for the United States bank, and the currency issued by banks chartered under State laws had begun to flood the country. The time of redemption had not come, prices were inflated, pocketbooks were filled to bursting, and there was an eager rush from the East, not only of workers and settlers, but of capital seeking investments. These were days not only of "wild cat" banks, but of "wild cat" schemes of every description. The future looked rosy to all. The West was a field not only for the work of the plow, but for the play of the imagination, and thus hundreds of paper cities were laid out all over the West and Northwest—cities the names of which are only recalled by those delving in the annals of the past. The Erie Canal was one long line of tow boats, bringing colonists to the West, and the rivers and trails of Southern Michigan became alive with the boats or the wagons and teams of would-be settlers. The fact that Lucius Lyon had been elected to the United States Senate, and that he was enthusiastically interested in Grand Rapids, did very much toward directing attention to this locality, and to his publicity work were added the well founded reports of the great water power to be developed, of the wonderful timber lands, and of the deposits of salt and gypsum. Earlier settlements had been retarded by the prevalence of "fever and ague," which affected, more or less, all of the newcomers; the epidemic of cholera at Detroit, in which the Governor of Michigan Territory lost his life, and the Black Hawk War which raged throughout Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin, caused uneasiness in Michigan and Indiana, and unbounded terror in the hearts of the more timid Easterners. Black Hawk was conquered and imprisoned by 1836; the fever abated as settlement grew, and the epidemic of cholera ended at Detroit. So early as Nov. 9, 1831, the Michigan Journal and Advertiser said of this region:

"Land joining Grand River is exceedingly fertile, abounding with prairies of the richest alluvial soil. The largest corn I ever saw was that raised by the Indians on these prairies. Many hundred farms might be conducted here, all of the best kind, and there would be but little choice. A gentleman who is now surveying the country in every part of the Territory, accords with me in the opinion that the Grand River country, taking all its advantages into consideration, is the finest portion of our new Territory."



With all these favorable conditions settlers poured into Grand Rapids all through the year 1836. They came along four principal routes. The northern route was via Pontiac and west across Shiawassee, Clinton and Ionia counties. John Ball came by this route, finding it a day's journey from house to house between Ionia and Pontiac. The comparatively short portage between Saginaw and Grand River was an item in favor of this route, for water transportation was by far the easiest method known to the pioneer. The other routes were known as the Grand River road, the Territorial road, and the much longer, but more comfortable, route by the Great Lakes. What is called the Grand River road was the shortest from Detroit, but was obstructed by heavy timber. The Territorial road extended west from Ann Arbor through Jackson, Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties, settlers turning off from Jackson, Battle Creek or Kalamazoo to reach their northern destinations. The workmen under N. O. Sargeant, coming in 1835, took this road to Jackson and then floated down the Grand River in flat bottom scows, and this road was adopted by many settlers, and during 1836, the combined effort of pioneers at Bellevue, Marshall and Vermontville had cut a possible road through to Ionia. From the south to Grand Rapids, the road led through the western part of Barry county, and the old Indian trail led from Kalamazoo, through Gull Prairie, to the celebrated hotel at Yankee Springs; thence down the Thornapple River to the site used chiefly for the transportation of supplies, although a number of Grand Rapids pioneers came by water.

Another favorable condition to settlement was the nearer approach to real statehood. For the second time in its history, Michigan was nominally under two governments. Following the Revolutionary War, it was both British and American and, from 1835 to 1837, it was both a State and a Territory. The Ordinance of 1787 provided that when a territory acquired sufficient population it might organize as a State by the adoption of a constitution not at variance with the Constitution of the United States or with other State constitutions. Having reached the required population, Michigan had taken these steps, in 1835, and, as already noted, had held a constitutional convention and had elected Lucius Lyon and John Norvell, Senators; and Stevens T. Mason as the first Governor. The question of the south boundary arose and this was complicated by the attitude of the Slave States, which were at all times anxious to delay the admission of a new free State. Lucius Lyon fought bravely for the rights of Michigan to the south, but his superior knowledge of the wealth of the upper peninsula made him more ready to accept the compromise offered by Congress when admission to the Union was at first refused with the boundaries described by the constitutional convention. President Jackson, in the face of an approaching Presidential election, was much more favorably inclined to the voters of the state of Ohio than to the voteless inhabitants of Michigan Territory. The full weight of the Democratic party was, therefore, used to urge a compromise and, in November, 1836, the Democratic committee of Wayne County issued circulars favoring the calling of another convention. Governor Mason gave opinion that the consent of the legislature was not necessary, and this convention, held by many to have been called without

authority, met at Ann Arbor, Dec. 14, 1836, and yielded to the demands of Congress. All question as to the legality of this convention was eagerly waived by the Democratic majority in Congress, and Michigan became a real State Jan. 26, 1837, with Ohio receiving the disputed strip and the upper peninsula being added to Michigan; although the northern and western boundaries were in dispute between Great Britain and the United States, and between Michigan and Wisconsin for a number of years.

Quite the most important event affecting Grand Rapids as a whole, during the year 1836, was the Indian treaty by which the lands in Michigan north of Grand River were ceded to the United States. The preliminary work of this treaty was done by H. R. Schoolcraft in his work among the tribes of Northern Michigan, much of it in the upper peninsula. As knowledge of the value of the territory for lumbering and agriculture became better known, the eyes of the white men were eagerly fixed upon Northern Michigan, and it was determined to secure this cession from the Indians. From the standpoint of the ultimate good of civilization, and as following the law of the survival of the fittest, there can be no question as to its wisdom, but the Indians were, for a pittance, robbed of their homes and of their rich inheritance. Something of the Indian attitude and the rather questionable methods used to obtain the consent of the representatives of the tribes has already been told in the words of Isaac McCoy. As Senator and as a man with large financial interests throughout Michigan, and especially at Grand Rapids, Lucius Lyon was greatly interested in having this treaty arranged.



## CHAPTER V.

### OTHER SETTLEMENTS AND INCIDENTS

POPULATION IN 1836—PROMINENT PIONEERS—WILLIAM HALDANE—WILLIAM A. RICHMOND—ROBERT HILTON—LOREN M. PAGE—LOVELL MOORE—FIRST BOOKSTORE—SOLOMON L. WITHEY—JOHN BALL—BOOM DAYS—LEONARD COVELL—HARRY DEAN—GEORGE YOUNG—JOSIAH L. WHEELER—JOHN T. HOLMES—WILLIAM MORMAN—ANDREW WATSON—FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS—CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1837.

Estimates of the population of Grand Rapids at the close of 1836 varied all the way from 500 to 1,000, but it is safe to assume that the smaller number was more nearly correct. Even at that, the population was five-fold that of the preceding year, and during the course of the twelve months, the drifting population was undoubtedly large, as many visited the region, some to return and some to locate in other sections of the West. It would be impossible to give the names of all those who called Grand Rapids their home at this time, but some there were who remained and established themselves and who constituted the *dramatis personae* of the western village for the next generation. That they were splendid citizens, the great majority drawn from the best blood of New England and New York, is shown by the high percentage of those who achieved lasting reputation, and who, amid great discouragement, won success. Such a community could not be found in the United States today. The majority of both men and women were between twenty-five and thirty years of age, and upon them fell the responsibilities which now would fall upon much older shoulders. Men over forty-five years were rare, and were regarded almost as patriarchs. There were children, but few youths. Naturally, it was only the hardy and adventurous who had left comfortable homes to face the hardships of the wilderness. They had the buoyancy of youth and magnificent optimism. They were fun loving, full of animal spirits, and some of them, at times, full of spirits *frumenti*. Whiskey was cheap, poor, and plentiful, and was the chief relief of many from the hardships and from daily toil. It is easy to say that there were no railroads, but it is hard to realize the fact—harder still to vision a Grand Rapids with the patient ox as the chief reliance for overland transportation, and the canoe and mud scow for travel *de luxe*. Not only were they without electric lights and gas, but the use of kerosene as an illuminant had not been discovered. Even lard oil was a discovery of a later date, and the tallow dip and the bears' grease candle was the source of light for those foolish enough to remain awake after sundown. Manufactured articles of all kinds were scarce and high, owing to transportation difficulties. Their clothes were home spun, but not of their own spinning, for they had as yet no sheep, no wool, and no weaving appliances. Books were few, and highly prized; newspapers were almost as rare and valuable; and not only all this, but food was scarce.

On all sides there were seemingly unending forests, but these must be cleared and planted before crops could be grown, and this was a work of much time, even for the most willing hands. What they had, therefore, was what they brought with them, the little that could be transported under the conditions just indicated, and what they made themselves. That they accomplished so much, that they took the time and gave attention to the founding of churches, and schools, and social institutions, when the conditions of life were so hard and exacting, is one of the things of which their descendants can be most proud. One can readily overlook their follies and even their vices, in view of their great accomplishments and the splendid foundation which they laid for a future civilization.

The most important part of the history of Grand Rapids and Kent County at this time is found in a statement concerning the men attracted to the community who became factors in its life and growth: Amos Hosford Smith came from New York City with Simeon P. and B. Walter Smith, and Edward P. Camp, in December, 1835. He was twenty-three years old when he reached Grand Rapids. The party had come on horseback from Monroe, but at Gull Prairie they had procured sleighs and engaged Robert Scales to guide them. They swam their horses through the icy waters of the Thornapple River, and secured lodgment at the home of Edward Robinson, and the next day had reached Joel Guild's hospitable home at Grand Rapids. Mr. Smith opened a store near the Eagle Hotel, and in merchandising and bookkeeping found employment until 1850, when he was the captain of the steamboat Algoma. One of his first accomplishments was to start the first Sunday School in Grand Rapids, in the room over his store, this being one of the beginnings of the Congregational Society, although Mr. Smith was in later years a vestryman of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. In 1839 he was married to Mary M. Nelson and both he and his wife were prominent in the later history of the community.

William Haldane has been called the father of cabinet making in Grand Rapids. He was but twenty years old when he came here, in 1836, and within a year he had established himself in a frame building on Prospect Hill at the southwest corner of Ottawa and Pearl. He soon returned to Ohio, but came back to Grand Rapids, three years later, with the first machine for chairmaking ever brought to Michigan, and he was engaged in the manufacture of furniture and the undertaking business until 1871. It was upon his return to Michigan that he built the first brick house in Grand Rapids, bringing the brick from Milwaukee. This building was torn down, in 1890, to give way for the erection of the Michigan Trust Building. Luman and Lucius Jenison were New York twins, twenty-three years of age, when they first settled seven miles down the river. They were somewhat eccentric, and acquired much wealth as lumbermen in Ottawa County. Hezekiah Green was a pioneer of 1836, and with him came his daughter Mary, who succeeded Miss Bond as teacher at the mission schoolhouse, in 1839, in the first exclusive school for white children, and who became Mrs. William T. Blakely, in 1842.

William Almy Richmond, born in New York, in 1808, came to Grand Rapids in 1836, soon became interested with the Kent Company



and, in later years, was a representative of the Lyon interests here. He was a strong factor in the politics of the community, aided in the construction of the first lattice bridge across Grand River, and that he was recognized from the first as a man of exceptional abilities is shown by the fact that during his first year of residence he was chosen as a delegate from the district of Clinton, Ionia and Kent Counties to the convention at which the terms of Statehood offered Michigan by Congress were rejected. Throughout succeeding pages, Mr. Richmond will be mentioned many times. Samuel L. Fuller was but eighteen years old when he came as an assistant to John Almy in making the improvements at Grand Rapids. He was one of the incorporators of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, and of Kent Scientific Institute. He left Grand Rapids in 1840, however, and did not return to this city until 1867, when he entered the banking business with his brother, Edward P. Fuller. Samuel F. Perkins was the pioneer tanner, establishing himself just above Michigan street on the east bank of the river, continuing in the business until 1867, a part of the time in partnership with William Woodward, and the remainder as an individual. He built up a successful business, in spite of the fact that three times he was visited by disastrous fires. Ebenezer Davis established himself near Leonard street on the west side of the river, and later became a pioneer of Wyoming Township. With him came his young son, Horace W., who, in manhood, was one of the prominent officials of the city and county. An important addition to the community was the gristmill erected at Coldbrook by Dwight and James Lyman, with Mr. Fish and John C. Stonehouse as millers. Gypsum was ground at this mill, in 1838, and, later, wood turning machinery was added. The foundations for what was long known as the "*big mill*" were laid in this year as a part of the Kent Company's enterprise. N. O. Sargeant was associated with Lucius Lyon in this, but he sold his interests to Almy, Richmond & Carroll. The mill was completed the year following, by the Kent Company, with Smith & Brownell as the builders, and was operated by James A. Rumsey until 1845.

Robert Hilton was one of the older men of the community, having been born in New Hampshire, in 1799, and thus boasted of thirty-seven years when he first came to Grand Rapids. He was a carpenter, and at once found plenty of work. He farmed on his claim, several miles below the Rapids, and his first work in the city was on the old National Hotel, Judge Morrison's residence, and, later, the store of Nelson Brothers, known as the Grinnell Block. He was early recognized as a man of strong character, and was chosen as a justice of the peace soon after his arrival. Col. Nehemiah Hathaway settled in Grandville, and installed the first trip-hammer at McCray's Machine Shop, in 1840, being succeeded by his son, Charles W., who continued the business, established a reputation as a maker of fine tools, and was known as the inventor of steel fingers for grain cradles. Israel Victor Harris was a merchant of this year, coming on foot to Grand Rapids, where he was joined by his brother, Silas G. Harris. They entered into the general merchandising business with James M. Smith. Mr. Harris came with a military record, having been captain of a company of New York State militia. He was later a supervisor, and was a member of the State Senate. His brother Silas was a member of the Legis-



lature when twenty-five years of age, and was Speaker of the House, but died in his youth.

Loren M. Page was born in Vermont, in 1811, came to Grand Rapids as a painter, and lived a long and honorable life in the community. Five of his sons enlisted in the Union army, and he took considerable interest in the schools of the city, served as Alderman in 1851. He was also one of the pioneers, in a small way, in the chair-making industry, in 1841, but his chief work was as a painter and decorator, and in this line he was known for nearly fifty years.

One of the most important men coming to the community was Lovell Moore. He was born at Shirley, Mass., in 1797, and in April, 1831, with his brothers, John and Hiram, he made a trip of exploration to Michigan Territory. He practiced law at Comstock from 1833 to 1836, and in the fall of that year came with his family to Grand Rapids, being one of the first lawyers in the city. He lived at the Baptist mission house on the west side of the river and his office was on the east side, so that his Indian canoe, with his name boldly painted on it, was his private ferry. His genial disposition soon made him many friends and he was elected as justice of the peace. In 1840 he removed to the east side of the river, living on the corner of Fulton and Division streets. He was later prominent in the organization of the Republican party and was one of the strong men of the community throughout his life. Jacob Barns came with his father, in 1836, the family residence being on the corner of Division and Fountain streets, which was then in a swamp, and it was sometimes necessary to use a boat to get home. He early drifted into the printers' trade and helped to raise the first printing press used in Grand Rapids from the bed of Grand River, where it was deposited by an accident. In another ten years he had become a part owner of the Grand Rapids "Enquirer" and later was connected with the "Daily Enquirer and Herald." He was Register of the United States Land Office under Buchanan, and was interested in the Detroit "Free Press" during the war, after which he returned to Grand Rapids and went into an unsuccessful milling venture with A. X. Cary. His last years were spent at Traverse City, and he was buried in Grand Rapids. Philander Tracy, a sailor by trade, came to Grand Haven, in 1834, and to Grand Rapids in 1836. He was a lumberman and soon removed to Lowell, returning to Grand Rapids in 1840, and being elected associate judge. Oren McClure, a Vermonter, settled at Coldbrook, and Horace McClure was the competitor of Loren Page as a painter. Kendall Woodward was one of the first mechanics and builders and located at the foot of Pearl and Monroe streets. Thomas Sargeant came with his brother, Nathaniel, and may be called Grand Rapids' first landscape gardener, for with his team he built many of the terraces which beautified the city. He was also a member of one of the first fire companies. Knowlton S. Pettibone was well known as a surveyor and civil engineer and was one of the founders of the Division Street Methodist Church. He followed his profession in Grand Rapids for more than forty years. One of the most influential men, coming in 1836, was Charles H. Taylor, who is spoken of by John Ball as one of the leading lights of the pioneer debating association, and who served as county clerk, member of the Legislature, Secretary of State, Reg-



ister of the United States Land Office, postmaster and editor, and was almost constantly before the public during the course of his long and honorable career in Grand Rapids. Solomon Withey, who was also mentioned by John Ball as the second proprietor of the Bridge Street Hotel, was a very popular newcomer, in 1836. He was interested with Yankee Lewis in the maintenance of mail and stage service between Battle Creek and Grand Rapids.

The intellectual requirements of the community were first catered to by John W. Peirce, who came with a small stock of books and stationery and was in business at the corner of Bond and Crescent streets until 1848, being the sole representative of this line of business. Joseph Pannel, an Englishman, was the first to brew beer in the Grand River Valley. The English hop beer which he made in his little brew house on Bond street, at the foot of Prospect Hill, did not at once find favor with the Americans, who were accustomed to more fiery liquor, but he gradually found a wider sale for his product and in the course of the next ten years his business was established on a firm basis.

Solomon L. Withey came with his father, Solomon, in 1836, and became one of the most prominent attorneys of the new community. He was born at St. Albans, Vt., in 1820, and within a few years was employed as a school teacher. In 1839, he began the study of law with A. D. Rathbone and, later, with George Martin, earning his living by working in the postoffice at \$8 a month. Two pioneer families were united when he was married to Marion L. Hinsdill, daughter of Myron and Emily Hinsdill, who also came to Grand Rapids in 1836. Mr. Withey is another whose name finds frequent mention in Grand Rapids history, for he was United States District Judge when he died. George Martin came in 1837 as an attorney and was soon recognized by his election as justice of the peace and acted as assignee for Louis Campau in the troublous times of 1837. He was city attorney, in 1839; a member of the charter committee for the city, in 1850, and, in 1852, was chief justice of Michigan. The preliminary meeting to organize the Episcopal Church was held in his office, and he was prominent in the social and literary life of the new community. Hezekiah Green is remembered as the proprietor of the first wagon works, which were located on Ionia street, south of Fountain. His partner in this enterprise was J. J. Baxter. Simeon Howland was a carpenter, located on Lyon street, where now stands the Houseman Building. He was one of the first deacons of the Congregational Church. Sylvester Granger was not only a builder, but a writer. He was clerk of Grand Rapids in 1836, and was known not only as a newspaper contributor, but as a debater at the lyceum. As a contractor he built the Court House, in 1838, for the contract price of \$3,000. During these years he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1843. David Burnett was mentioned by John Ball, in 1836, as building a block house at Ada. He was one of the most able of the new mechanics and was foreman for James Scribner and Isaac Turner in building the first bridge at Grand Rapids, in 1845. He also built the second and third bridges here and the bridge at Lyon, which was built in 1837, and rebuilt in 1843, and for which he received 2,000 acres of land. In 1840, he built what was known as the Stone School House,



and he became noted as a builder of lighthouses and railway bridges. He was a member of the building committee of the Swedenborgian Church, and later was in the clothing business with Amos Rathbone. Howard Jennings, with his father-in-law, Captain Short, were the early boat builders, building the "Stevens T. Mason" for Richard Godfroy and others. His sister, Mrs. Phoebe Cramond, was the first milliner in Grand Rapids, occupying a store at Monroe and Ottawa streets, in 1838. S. S. Stewart was one of the wealthy newcomers, having \$1,800 in cash when he arrived overland from Detroit. He lived in a slab house on the north side of Michigan street, below Ottawa, and as a mason did some of the early limestone work of the city. In 1846 he moved to a farm in Cascade. Henry C. Smith had a small shop at Monroe and Ottawa and soon became chairman of the village board of trustees. He later resided in Plainfield, from which township he was supervisor in 1845; represented the County in the Legislature in 1845, and in 1868 returned to Grand Rapids, where he spent the remainder of his life. James Scribner pre-empted land in the winter of 1836 and was one of the most enterprising of the pioneers in a small way. He platted what was known as "Scribner's Addition" on the west side of the river, and his Oak Oil, a patent medicine, was one of the things which made Grand Rapids famous in the early days.

James, Joseph and William McCrath were three brothers, coming in the employ of the Kent Company and erecting a lime kiln on the west side, near the head of the Rapids. Harry Eaton early gained the confidence of the community and was the first treasurer of Walker Township, and was later treasurer of Grand Rapids. He entered the mercantile business, was known as a lumberman, and became sheriff of Kent County in 1841. His grocery and restaurant on Market street was a favorite resort for the pioneers. George M. and Warren P. Mills came from New York and had a grocery at the corner of Pearl and what was then Canal street, now Monroe avenue. George M. became active in politics and was a leading temperance worker in the old Washingtonian Society. He was connected with Wilder D. Foster in a little tinshop on the corner of Pearl and Monroe streets. Abel Page was the first horticulturist in Western Michigan and planted the first nursery in the Grand River Valley, becoming noted throughout all this section of the State. Jacob Rogers, a Yankee from Vermont, was one of the farmers to establish themselves; and George Coggeshall, who was very active in the community as a representative of the Lucius Lyon interests, was an 1836 arrival, as was James M. Nelson, who first had a small store opposite the Eagle Hotel, and afterward became well known in the lumber industry and in the furniture trade. With his brother, George C. Nelson, he built a saw-mill on Mill Creek, in 1837, and, the following winter, relieved the famine which threatened the community by going to Indiana and returning with a drove of 280 hogs, which were eagerly bought by the settlers. He was the first to raft lumber down Grand River, and later had an equally enviable reputation for sagacity and skill as a pioneer furniture manufacturer.

The man whose coming had perhaps the most influence upon the future of the city was John Ball, who was born Nov. 12, 1794, and



died at Grand Rapids, Feb. 5, 1884, having lived nearly 90 years. His parents were of old New England stock, and Tenny's Hill, near Hebron, Grafton County, New Hampshire, was his birthplace. His early life was spent on his father's farm, and he was called for service in the War of 1812, but the war closed before he saw actual service. His brief winters' schooling had been eked out with much reading and he finally persuaded his father to send him to Salisbury Academy. Teaching enabled him to carry on his school work, and he later worked his way through Dartmouth College, graduating in the class of 1820, and having such distinguished classmates as Rufus Choate and George P. Marsh. Teaching also aided him to continue his education in the study of law, with Walbridge & Lansing, at Lansingburgh, New York. He had the spirit of the explorer and adventurer, and he set sail from New York City for Darien, Georgia, arriving there penniless, as the ship was wrecked and he barely escaped with his life. Teaching again was his stay in this distress, and for six months he earned his livelihood in this manner, near Savannah. Returning to Lansingburgh, he was admitted to the bar, in 1824, and in 1827 was elected a justice of the peace. The versatility of his character is shown by the fact that while he was thus building up a lucrative law practice his brother-in-law, William Powers, was killed by an explosion of varnish in his oil-cloth factory. This left Mr. Ball's sister and her two children dependent upon the carrying on of the business, and Mr. Ball relinquished his law practice, took up the management of the factory, increased its business, and, by 1831, had the concern well established and his sister in an independent position. Having accomplished this, Mr. Ball felt that he might gratify his long-felt desire to traverse the United States to the Pacific coast. It must be borne in mind that there was no railroad west of the Allegheny mountains, and that the journey was one filled with great hazard and difficulties, and included travel through hostile Indian country and lands which were practically unexplored. He joined a party, fitted out by Nathaniel Wyeth, of Boston, and the route included but sixty miles of railroad travel, on the Baltimore & Ohio, and thence by canal and on horseback, to Pittsburgh. The Ohio and the Mississippi Rivers took them to St. Louis, from which small village they journeyed to Independence, Mo., where they became part of the well-known expedition headed by Capt. William Buble. Four months were required to make the journey across the plains and the mountains, and they made their way to the Columbia River, where Mr. Ball became the guest of Dr. McLaughlin, factor of the Hudson Bay Company. Once again Mr. Ball resorted to teaching, and he opened the first school in what is now the State of Oregon. Later, he was one of the first white farmers of Oregon, building his cabin on the site of the present city of Portland. Becoming discouraged, he again started forth on his travels, going to San Francisco and thence to Honolulu. The Hawaiians were then under native rule and their country was known as the Sandwich Islands. Mr. Ball returned to America via Tahiti and Cape Horn, reaching Rio Janeiro after a stormy passage of seventy days, and securing passage from that port on a United States war vessel. It was two and a half years after he had left Lansingburgh, and he had been given up for lost when he returned to that city. By this time his reputation as a traveler and explorer, as well as a capable business man



of sound judgment, was well established and he was urged by a party of would-be investors to go to Western Michigan as a land prospector. It was in this way that he first came to Grand Rapids, in November, 1836. The parties for whom he came were Dr. T. C. Brinsmaid, Dr. F. B. Leonard, J. E. Whipple, and a Mr. Webster. It was proposed to invest from sixty to eighty thousand dollars, but the amount invested did not in the end exceed ten thousand dollars. He was to purchase land in any free State of the West in his own name and was to receive one-fourth of the profits. Concluding that the Grand River district was the most promising, he journeyed to this region from Detroit. Speaking of his journey he said:

"I came from Gull Prairie, where we stopped and enjoyed Lewis' rousing fire and partook of his wife's good cheer. The next day I came to Mr. Leonard's, on the Thornapple, and observing some books drying in the sun, I was informed that the day before the stage wagon had spilled its baggage while crossing the river and that the trunk containing these books was not at the time recovered; that it belonged to a Mr. Johnson, a lawyer, who was bound to Grand Rapids. This was Simeon Johnson, whom every old settler remembers. I took what was called the Flat River trail, which led to the Grand River, at what is now Lowell. Arriving there, I stopped with Mr. Marsac, an Indian trader, brother of Mrs. Louis Campau. This was my arrival in the Grand River Valley, the 14th day of October, 1836. Marsac and the Robinsons, at the mouth of the Thornapple, were the only white people between Grand Rapids and Ionia. But soon after, Lewis Robinson settled at the mouth of the Flat River and Mr. Daniel and others in Vergennes."

The next day Mr. Ball followed the trail to Ionia, stopping with Mr. Yeoman's at his cabin. He found the place filled with people having business with the land office, and said that Mr. Hutchins, receiver, "soon took in silver to the amount of his bail and had to shut up office and cart the silver through the woods to Detroit."

An interesting description of the Ionia land office, which was opened in 1836 for the sale of government lands south of the Grand River, was published in the Detroit "Post and Tribune," June 1, 1878, in which it was said: "With the opening of the office there came a rush of settlers and speculators. Two hotels were opened, and these, and the houses of settlers, were filled to overflowing. Many are the stories told of the manner in which men were stowed away for the night and the reckless way in which they threw their bags of specie about, feeling sure that no one would steal them, considering the very poor facilities for getting away with the plunder. The opening of the land office at this juncture is said to have been unfortunate for the country. Fraud was alive and at work even in those days, and succeeded, by work in the land office, in driving away many who came to buy homes; and the land was left to speculators, who held it from settlement and improvement."

It would appear that the frauds outlined above were not sufficient to gratify the greed of the officers in charge, for, before the close of 1837, Allen Hutchins, the receiver, was dismissed from government service on account of defalcation, and General Brown, the receiver, was also removed. Senator Lyon and Major Calvin Britain, of St.



Joseph, were sureties for Hutchins, and Senator Lyon wrote in March, 1838: "We shall, I fear, lose some ten or fifteen thousand dollars, perhaps more. But that is enough to nearly or quite ruin me as the times are at present." Mr. Lyon empowered Sheldon McKnight to take over the moneys and papers in the office and to take steps to protect the bondsmen, asking that a deputy marshal levy on all Hutchins' property, whether in houses and lands in the village and county of Ionia, or in elegant furniture in the rapids of Grand River, where I understand he had a costly set of mahogany, etc., prepared." Hutchins was seen in New York City, but left for parts unknown. To succeed him, William A. Richmond was appointed receiver of public money for the Grand River district, and Mr. Lyon attempted to secure the passage of a bill creating a new land district out of the eastern part of the Grand River district and removing the office from Ionia to Grand Rapids.

Having digressed to follow the early history of the Ionia land office, it would be well to follow John Ball on his first trip to Grand Rapids. This, in some respects, might be termed a typical experience, illustrative of many other homeseekers' toils and adventures in those days. He went on horseback with a Mr. Anderson to look for pine lands in Ottawa County and came the first day to Grand Rapids, stopping at the Eagle Tavern, "then the only one at the place and kept by William H. Godfroy." Their stay was brief and early the next morning they reached Grandville, where there was no tavern, but Mrs. Charles Oakes accommodated them with good hot coffee. At the mill which Mr. Ketchum was building near the village they also found provisions scarce. This difficulty met them on all sides and Mr. Ball said: "As yet nothing had been raised in Kent County or Ottawa, and nothing like a supply in Ionia; and all had to be brought by way of the lakes from Buffalo or Cleveland." Concerning Grand Rapids, he said: "I was little at Grand Rapids the first fall and winter I was in the State. But at one time, when there, I went up through the mud and among the stumps to Bridge street, where Mr. Coggeshall lived, and met a man at an office west of his house and asked him the price of lots. He—it was Judge Almy—answered that on Canal and Kent streets they were \$50 a front foot, or \$2,500 a lot. I did not invest, and made no further inquiry about lots in Grand Rapids. My business had led me to travel much up and down the Grand River country, and I had become more acquainted with the people elsewhere than at Grand Rapids. But in the spring of 1837, I sat down at Grand Rapids to make it my permanent home. I boarded at the Eagle, then kept by our late Mr. Moran. The three brothers Nelson were boarders, and had a store opposite. Being a little suspicious of Indian sugar, they used to bring sugar from the store for their tea and coffee. Charles H. Taylor had his shop over their store and A. Hosford Smith had a store further down the street. Waterloo was then rather the business street. There were two warehouses on the river below and two at the foot of Monroe street. Uncle Louis Campau's mansion became a part of the Rathbun House. Richard Godfroy had a like house where the Catholic church was afterward built and Myron Hinsdill lived where is now the Morton House. There was also a building on the north side of Monroe street, in which Drs. Wilson and Shepard had their office, and Esquire Beebe



(I think) his justice office. Dea. Page, with his three beautiful daughters, Mrs. Richmond one of them, and Judge Almy, lived where Butterworth & Lowes' machine shop now is; and A. D. Rathbone had a shanty office near Bronson street. Though there were but a few houses, there were a good many people. There were the brothers, Lyman and Edward Emerson, and then, or soon after, one Fuller. I cannot say precisely who were in Grand Rapids, as they were coming in fast, and all full of hope for a continuance of good, money-making times that would make all rich. The citizens were friendly and social; a stranger was kindly welcomed, and all soon became acquainted."

"The settlers out of the village were Judge Davis and the Reeds, out by the lake [Reeds and Fish lakes]; Alvin Wansey, the Messrs. Guild and Burton, by the fair grounds; Esquires Chubb and Howlett, toward Grandville; and then, over the river, E. H. Turner, Captain Sibley, the Messrs. Davis, and afterwards James Scribner. Others had gone upon the lately purchased Indian lands, and soon many more came in and went upon the unsurveyed lands north of the Grand River. Among the Grand Rapids enterprises, a steamboat had been bought at Toledo to run on the Grand River. On the way it was wrecked on Thunder Bay Island of Lake Huron. But the engine was saved and brought around, and Richard Godfroy built a boat, which made its first trip to Grandville on the Fourth of July. We had quite a celebration; an oration on the boat, and great rejoicing generally on that account.

"I must say a word about banking at Grand Rapids. There was the Grand River Bank, of which Almy was president and Richmond, cashier. It was in the office of the Kent Company on Bridge street. Mr. Coggeshall and some others became dissatisfied and undertook to establish another bank, to be located in the Campau plat part of the village. They got a room over Smith & Evans' store, about where the west part of Luce's Block now is; and, after much urging, Louis Campau consented to be president and Simeon Johnson to be cashier. They named it the "People's Bank," got plates engraved, and some bills struck off, and even put into circulation. The capital stock was \$100,000. So, under the law, it required \$30,000 in specie to start on. Being all ready, as they claimed, they sent for the bank commissioner, Digby V. Bell, to come, make examination, and put the bank in legal operation. But instead of finding the required amount of specie he found but \$6,000, and they proposed to make up the rest by a draft of Mr. Coggeshall, of \$20,000 on a broker in New York, and one of Mr. Ketchum, on Chicago, for the balance. Mr. Bell did not see the propriety of the arrangement and said it would not do; so what next was to be done? They not only had bills out, but they had received deposits; and the specie shown, I suppose, was deposited to be drawn out as soon as the bank was in operation. They were very anxious to go on in some way, and so far satisfied the commissioner that they could that he agreed to give them a month for the purpose. But then it was to be on the condition that the means on hand should go into the hands of a receiver for the security of the bill-holders and depositors. When it was talked over who that man should be, they could agree on no one but myself. I did not at all like any connection with the matter, but, after much urging, consented to it. It was to be kept



as it was for the month, except to pay out to such cash depositors as should claim their money, and to redeem their bills then in circulation. Without any formality, Mr. Bell handed me the keys of the safe and said there was about such an amount of specie in this safe, and bills, and what he had passed upon as specie equivalent, in the other. The next morning, on opening the safe containing the paper deposits, I found missing some \$2,000. I felt it rather an awkward predicament. But soon Mr. Campau came in and said there were two keys to that safe, and he thought Mr. Cook had the other one. More of the money was soon drawn out by depositors and bill-holders, and when the month came round they were no better prepared to go into operation than before, and I had to keep charge still longer. But, wishing to go East, Mr. Bostwick took charge of what there was left and I went back to Troy, having been absent two years, instead of a few months, as I had expected when I left there."

While Grand Rapids received the major part of the newcomers, in 1836, and became a veritable boom city, there were numerous other settlements in Kent County, chiefly along the south bank of Grand River. At Lowell there was an Indian village of some three to four hundred inhabitants, under Chief Wobiwindego (White Giant) and Robinson and Tracy also had an eighty-acre tract fenced at the site of Lowell, on the right bank of the Flat River. Messrs. Hodges and Jones split the rails for this fence and Luther Lincoln planted the first apple tree in the township, on the left bank of Flat River. E. K. Bickford was a pioneer of 1836, and others at Lowell during this and the succeeding year were John and James Thompson, Cyrus Bennet, George Beebe, John, P. W. and James Fox, Dr. Silas Fallass, J. W. Fox, Caleb Page, Thompson I. Daniels, George Brown, and Rodney, Lucas and Lewis Robinson, three brothers who came with a party by ship in 1835. In Bowne, Jonathan Thomas entered a large tract and brought William Wooley, Frederick Thompson and Israel Graves from Toledo to farm his land. The journey with ox teams required two weeks and they built the first 12x16 log shanty in the township. Mr. Thomas was the monied man, and the others were his employees. He could not stand the climate, however, and returned to his New York home. The south part of Byron township was first settled by Nathan, Jerry and William Boynton, and Justus C., Jacob and Charles Rogers, but in 1837 Herman Kellogg and John Harmon were added to the settlement. The first cabin, with split log roof and floor and chimney of clay and sticks, was built by Nathan Boynton. Lewis Cook, Peter and George Teeple and Hiram Larraway were the 1836 pioneers of Cascade. In the year following, Edward Linen was the first of the Irish pioneers, and soon afterward a number of Irishmen, who had come to labor on the canal, decided to remain as farmers and located in this vicinity. Among these were James May, David Petted, John Farrell, James and William Annis, Michael Matthews and Christopher, Michael and Patrick Eardley. Wyoming township was organized as Byron township, May 2, 1836, with Charles Oakes as supervisor, G. H. Gordon as clerk, and I. A. Allen, Robert Howlett and E. P. Walker as justices. In 1835 the city of Grandville was founded by the so-called Grandville Company, composed of Eastern men, who platted eight acres, with additions, in 1836. They offered lots at \$25 each for building purposes and at \$200 each for speculators. A few



lots were sold at these prices, but the bulk were disposed of by the sheriff at much lower prices at the delinquent tax sales. In Vergennes there were numerous settlers in 1836, including Ira, Jesse, Alfred, and Chauncey Van Deusen, Everett Williams, Hamilton Andrews, Rodney Robinson, T. I. Daniels, John Thompson, Charles Francisco, Sylvester and Lester Hodges, Matthew, Patrick and Ebenezer Smith, Ira Danes, and Charles and James Thompson. The first settlers in the north part of the township were Barnard, David, Ira and Abel Ford, who came overland from Canada in 1838. In Grattan township, L. K. Madison was one of the first, while at Paris, Joel, Edward and John Guild, Barney Burton and James Vanderpool pre-empted land in 1833, Burton being the first resident. In 1834 the settlement was increased by the coming of Abraham Laraway, Alexander Bock, James Clark, Jacob Friant, and O. Spaulding, who came through on foot or by canoe. This party pre-empted land, in 1836, and cut the first road through to Grand Rapids. Alexander and Benjamin Clark were also Paris settlers in 1834. At Plainfield the first settler was James Friant, who was employed by James Clark to care for his cattle and who spent the winter of 1836 without white neighbors, although there were some twenty-five Indian families in the vicinity under Chief Neoggemaw. In 1837, G. H. Gordon built the first mill at Rogue River, and Jonathan and Abner Misner and Aaron Eager were pioneers of that year. George Hamilton, in Volume 21 of the Pioneer Collections, tells of Michigan conditions in these years as follows:

"From 1836 to 1838 there was a great boom. Forests were being cleared for farms, buildings going up in various townships, banks throughout the state could turn out all the money wanted by only signing the bills. Real estate was in demand and rapidly advancing. Everybody on a high horse, and happy, when, in the early part of 1837, a cyclone came. No gold or silver for redemption of 'wild cat,' or sale for town property or farm lands."

There are many others who might be mentioned as pioneers of the county, but enough has been said to show the energetic, progressive character, and sterling integrity of the great bulk of the new population and to give the chief elements in the drama of Kent County development and civilization. Others will be spoken of as they came, and as they play their part in the history of Grand River Valley.

The Legislature of what claimed to be the State of Michigan, although it was not then recognized as such by the National Congress, passed an act on March 24, 1836, organizing the County of Kent and providing for the election of the proper officials. The county as organized included but sixteen townships, the tiers to the north being added later, when the Indian title had been quieted. The county was given the same name as the township of Kent, which had been created two years before under the jurisdiction of Kalamazoo County. The village was not incorporated, but an annual meeting was held in April, at which a bounty of \$5 was offered for wolves killed within the town, and, for the first time, the inhabitants took part in a Presidential election, although but comparatively few of the residents had been here long enough to be voters. That the large majority of the pioneers were members of the old-time Democratic party is shown by the vote, which was 64 for Van Buren, and 7 scattering. The neces-



sity for schools was met by Miss Sophia Page, who taught a school which held its sessions in a little barn to the southeast, across the street from the present Morton House. It was built of boards set up endwise and with a floor of boards laid down without matching. A school for young men was taught by Daniel Smith, and for young women one was taught by Miss Mary Hinsdill in rooms in the National Hotel; but no attempt was made to conduct a school under the district organization of the previous year. In church affairs the Baptist mission was closed when Rev. Leonard Slater removed to Gull Prairie and the need for a Protestant organization of some kind was met when a little band of the faithful met, on Sept. 18, 1836, in the dining room of Myron Hinsdill's home, which stood where the Morton House now stands. There were twenty-two persons at this little meeting, over which Rev. S. Woodbury presided, and Samuel Howland and George Sheldon were chosen as elders and Myron Hinsdill and Ebenezer Davis as deacons of the new church, which adopted the Presbyterian form of government. A Sunday School was organized and services were held at the Hinsdill home. The beginning of the Episcopal Society was also made when David J. Burger was sent to Grand Rapids, in August, 1836, as a lay reader. His ministrations led to a call for the organization of a church, and a meeting was held on Oct. 6, at which time "St. Mark's Church of the Village and County of Kent" was given birth. Many of the most prominent of the pioneers were connected with this organization, of which the first officers were: Wardens, George Coggeshall and Jefferson Morrison; vestry men, Charles Shepard, W. A. Richmond, John Almy, D. A. Lyman, John Thompson, S. M. Johnson, H. P. Bridge and Edward Emerson; treasurer, George Coggeshall. Among other residents who signed a call for this meeting were J. B. Calder, John Beach, James Thompson, J. W. Peirce, S. L. Fuller, Michael Deemes, C. I. Walker, G. C. Nelson, William and James Annis, and A. N. Lothrop. Mr. Burger soon left Grand Rapids and the church organization languished during the next few years. The interests of the Catholic people were cared for by Father Andreas Vizsoczy at the old mission buildings.

In the organic act, by which Michigan was recognized as a State, it was provided that the State should be granted six sections of land adjoining the supposed location of salt springs, not to exceed twelve. These selections were made upon surface indications, but this was the first step toward the exploitation of the salt wells, which played such an important part in giving Grand Rapids wide publicity in the early days. The presence of gypsum was known, but no steps were then taken to develop this vast industry. Quite naturally the first and greatest necessity of the settlers was for grist and saw-mills. There were two primitive mills before 1836, and in this year the foundations for the "Big Mill" were laid by the Kent Company, and the erection of the grist-mill on Coldbrook was commenced by Dwight and James Lyman. Several saw-mills were already in operation, and in 1836 a new one was built on Plaster Creek, and Josiah Burton built one on a tributary of the same creek for Louis Campau, but no real steps were taken to develop the lumber industry and the saw-mills were simply for the convenience of the settlers for local domestic purposes. Two or three of the first settlers brought foot lathes with them and there were some rather crude attempts at home-made furni-



ture. Such a shop was established by David Wooster and Zephaniah Adams, and in their employ was John L. Smith, who is said to have made the first chairs manufactured at Grand Rapids. Another industry was that of brick-making, established first by John Davis, in 1834, and next by Solomon Withey, at the corner of Ionia and Coldbrook streets, in 1836, the first output being used to build the chimney for the residence of George Coggeshell. It is said that owing to the large amount of lime in the clay the first rain caused this chimney to slack and it was soon a heap of ruins. This compelled the location of another clay bank and this was soon done by A. O. Withey, the industry was resumed on Division street, near Oakes street, and of its product many of the earlier brick buildings were made. Other industries have been spoken of in connection with the individual pioneers mentioned. The river was the great channel for transportation, and by the end of 1836 much progress had been made on the east-side canal under direction of the Kent Company. Pole boats were the only boats of any considerable size used on the river at this time, and these were owned by Louis Campau, Francis B. and Thomas D. Gilbert, and Richard Godfroy. The hotel industry was a prominent and necessary one with the large floating population, and the taverns, all of which had bars in connection, were the most prosperous institutions. In 1836, there was the Eagle Tavern, "kept" by Louis Marsac, and the Hinsdill Hotel by Myron Hinsdill, and practically all the residences were filled by transients. The only places for public gatherings were the "old yellow warehouse" and the ball room of the Hinsdill Hotel. Thus we have a picture of Grand Rapids as it was at the opening of 1837, when Michigan first stepped forth into full-fledged Statehood. Money was plentiful, hope was high, strangers were coming by the score. Louis Campau, who had been a struggling French trader a few years before, now found himself practically the head of an enterprising and growing community. The land which he had preempted and platted in 1832 had become of value. Men were bidding against each other for favorable locations, and Mr. Campau was estimated to have been worth at least \$100,000, which, by comparison with present day conditions, made him more than a millionaire. The Kent Company was headed by no less a person than a United States senator, who was interested in the development of the community, and in position to give Grand Rapids the widest publicity; and it may well be believed that New Years Day, 1837, found Grand Rapids one of the most active and promising settlements in all the West. John Ball returned to the East and did not locate in Grand Rapids permanently until 1837, when he boarded again at the Eagle Tavern. His daughter, Lucy Ball, in Volume 38 of the Pioneer Collections, tells of his experiences during this year. Having become widely acquainted through his travels in Michigan, and being known as an ardent Democrat, he was nominated for State representative for the counties of Ottawa, Kent, Ionia and Clinton. The pioneers took to politics as the proverbial duck does to water, and there was no lack of interest in this earliest campaign. Stevens T. Mason was the Democratic candidate for Governor against Trowbridge, the Whig nominee, and Miss Ball tells of a dodger circulated in the Grand River Valley warning settlers that one Conrad Ten Eyck was coming with the avowed purpose of electioneering for Mason, but in reality to arrest the settlers



on Government lands, and that settlers might be dragged 300 miles to Detroit for trial. Grand Rapids was the polling place for all of Kent and Ottawa counties, and Miss Ball said: "Seventy men came down the river on a steamboat and marched in line to the polls. Father received 397 votes out of the 505 cast. He was the third representative from the district after the organization of the State government, the first being Maj. Roswell Britton from Grandville, and Judge John Almy, of Grand Rapids, being the second. It was the middle of the summer before Grand Rapids began to feel the effects of the great financial panic of 1837. It was so far away from the center of civilization that it was several months before it felt the depression that was affecting the Eastern cities. When it came time for Mr. Ball to take up his duties in Detroit he practically had no business to leave behind him, for buying and selling of land had ceased. So all he had to do was to put his effects in a saddle-bag and mount his horse. The organizing of townships took up considerable time. The number of townships was quadrupled in Mr. Ball's district, and Grand Rapids was incorporated as a village. It was this winter that the Canadian Patriot war occurred, which helped to bring immigrants to Michigan. General Scott came to Detroit on business connected with this war, on a steamboat, during a January thaw. That thaw occasioned a great flood in Grand Rapids, quite as large if not larger than anything it has experienced in these days. The Legislature did not adjourn until April 7. Mr. Ball sold his horse and returned in a wagon to Grand Rapids, in company with Mrs. O'Flynn, Mrs. Watson and Miss Lucy Genereau (John Godfroy's first wife), ladies well known in pioneer days. The passage took them six days, but they had such a good social time that the journey did not seem long. On arriving home he found things sadly changed. Grand Rapids was no longer the lively little place he found when he first came there. A blight had fallen on Michigan, its lands and its finances were at a discount, for this was the time of wildcat banking. The People's Bank, of which Mr. Louis Campau became president, had commenced operations, but not having the required specie on hand when the bank commissioner called, this commissioner, Mr. D. V. Bell, after giving them a month's grace to raise the funds, put it in the hands of a receiver, appointing Mr. Ball. The summer was passed in winding up that business. He made but one trip at that time and that was to Port Sheldon, a village that was started by Philadelphians and was expected to outrival Grand Rapids. Everyone was leaving Grand Rapids that had money enough to get away. Mr. Ball went east to visit, but returned, for he was in love with Michigan and thought that there was no more beautiful site in that State than at Grand Rapids."

Of these boom days, Albert Baxter, in his excellent history of Kent County, says: "The speculative fever which became general, in 1836, gave a great impetus to prices, not only of real estate but of all commodities, and the reaction which came, in 1837, was inevitable. Splendid villages, and cities also, suddenly came into view—on paper—and plats and lots were sold at fabulous prices. Grand Rapids caught the fever. Village lots here rose quickly from \$25 to \$300, and from that still upward, for choice locations, till speculators ran wild in the haste to grow rich. But the revulsion came, not only in



property but in currency, and knocked the foundation from many an air castle. Visionary banking schemes, which had been thickly planted all over the State, went with the rest. Nearly all went largely in debt, and many soon had cause to bemoan their disastrous investments and speculative ventures."

Among the arrivals of this year—who were to become prominent—may be mentioned briefly the following: Canton Smith, known in pioneer days as the landlord of the Eagle and then of the National Hotel, and who later started the first water works system, owned the first cab in the city, was interested in the Battle Creek stage line, joined the gold seekers in California and returned to spend his declining years in Grand Rapids, glorying in the great record made by his son, Gen. Israel Canton Smith, who was born in Grand Rapids in 1839; Truman Kellogg, whose farm on Lake avenue became noted as a nursery, and who introduced the mulberry tree to the Grand River Valley, and for a time engaged in the manufacture of silk, although he did not allow business to interfere with his violent Abolition beliefs. He died, in 1845, while Grand Rapids was still a village. Loren M. Page led a long and useful life as a painter. William G. Mosely, whose overland trip from Detroit with a two-horse wagon required six days, was an active young man, was a clerk in the postoffice in Grand Rapids, in 1849, later figuring as a grocer and then as real estate dealer. Luman R. Atwater, who was prominent in the Old Settlers' Association of later days, and a great temperance worker, was a member of the Board of Education and superintendent of the Sunday School of the Division Street Methodist church for twenty-five years. He was also connected with the plow-making industry before the Civil War. John R. Godfroy came as a thirteen-year-old lad, although he had already had experience with his older brother in the Indian trade, with which he remained connected for a number of years, being known to the Indians of both the upper and the lower peninsula. In Grand Rapids his career was that of a merchant and prominent real estate dealer, and he became recorder of the city, in 1853. H. H. Ives came as a carpenter, via the Erie Canal to Buffalo, and on foot from Detroit. His first work here was to build a house for Solomon Withey, on Ottawa and Coldbrook streets. In 1838, he married Miss Sarah Peck, and their son, Calvin L. Ives, was prominent in the later history of Grand Rapids. He built the saw-mill for Wm. H. Withey, in 1837, and was for several years an alderman and later a member of the Board of Supervisors. Beginning life as a Methodist, he became one of the leaders of the Spiritualist faith. James D. Lyon, son of Heman H., began life in Grand Rapids at this time as a cook with John Ball's exploring party. He held numerous city and county offices, was the first to attempt the manufacture of woolen goods, and was later connected with Mr. Hathaway in the manufacture of axes. In the early days he was best known, however, as owner of the book-store at the corner of old Canal and Lyon streets, from 1848 to 1856. He was prominent in the Democratic party, in the Congregational church, and as a dealer in real estate. Edward S. Marsh was one of the first tailors, living in Grand Rapids until his death, in 1892. W. I. Blakely, after whom Blakely avenue is named, was one of the best known early contractors and builders. He had the contract for the Court House building, in 1838, and erected



the first district schoolhouse, in 1839. He was in the saw-mill business with Leonard Covell and R. W. Morris, and held city and county offices, being a supervisor following the Civil War. Owing to his early friendship with President Millard Fillmore, he was appointed Deputy United States Marshal, in 1850. Aaron Dikeman established the first jewelry store in Michigan, north of the Michigan Central Railroad in Grand Rapids, in 1837. He was comparatively an old man when coming here, being forty-one years of age. He was prominent as a Mason and was one of the founders of St. Mark's Church. He became popular at once, and within a year of his coming was elected county treasurer. The first burglary of importance occurred at his store. He was also known as the builder and owner of the steamboat "Empire," which ran between Grand Rapids and Grand Haven. He was a county supervisor, superintendent of the poor, and city alderman, dying in 1882.

Leonard Covell, who was born in Vermont, in 1816, came as a young man of twenty-one. His first occupation was that of a carpenter and builder. He erected the First Episcopal Church on Division and Crescent streets, the contract being for \$800. Later, he embarked in the drygoods business and, still later, was known as a hotel man and liveryman. Noted for his public spirit, he acquired a competence and was one of the founders of the Fifth National Bank. In 1855, he was marshal of the city. His grandson is the brigadier-general of Michigan troops in France these days. Henry Stone was the pioneer iron worker. His home was on Bond street, below Crescent. With his son, Henry G., he established the second foundry in Grand Rapids, and he had the honor of being the first plow-maker in the city. W. S. Levake established the first foundry, at the corner of Mill and Bridge streets. His plant was operated by water power and he abandoned the business in a few years. John Kirkland was a cooper, establishing himself on South Division street, near Cherry, where he made barrels by hand, and where he was established until the end of his life, some twenty-five years later.

Harry Dean came from Massachusetts, where he was born in 1799, and died in Grand Rapids in 1887. He was known for his cheerful disposition. He held high rank as a Mason, having been a charter member of Grand River Lodge No. 34, in 1849, and at his death was the oldest Mason in Michigan. Despite his cheerfulness he was city sexton in 1857, and one of the first trustees of the Division Street Methodist Church, later becoming connected with the Swedenborgian organization. He was an assessor in 1853, and in the earlier years he was one of those employed to toll the Congregational church bell upon occasion. Harry Eaton, a Vermonter, was first known as a merchant and lumber dealer, and his grocery and restaurant in the Sweet's Hotel building was a popular resort. He was the first treasurer of Walker township, and was county sheriff in 1841. The Grand Lodge of Masons attended his funeral, in 1859. Simeon M. Johnson, the first fire insurance agent, and later editor, lawyer and politician, was a leading spirit during the early days, dying in New York City in 1853. John M. Fox first came to the Grand River Valley in 1837, but he did not become prominent in Grand Rapids until some years later. The last years of his life were spent at Lowell. He was register



of deeds, from 1847 to 1852, and also served as a supervisor. With Wilder D. Foster, he was a contractor for the completion of the canal at the Rapids, in 1851, and was director of the Grand Rapids & Northern Railroad Company, in 1857. Edmund B. Bostwick left a strong impress upon the community. He was known as a very public spirited man and a great "booster" for Grand Rapids. He platted the Bostwick addition and was one of the men mentioned by John Ball in his account of early days in Grand Rapids. By 1846 a few scattered houses had been built on his addition. He was one of the early assessors and his home, on the corner of Cherry and College, was one of the best and most hospitable in the city. An enthusiastic planner, he was handicapped by lack of capital. In connection with John Almy he published a pamphlet, in 1845, setting forth the advantages of Grand Rapids, and he was one of the founders of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, donating a lot for the purpose of its erection, in 1847. In 1844, he was one of a party of Grand Rapids explorers in the copper region of Lake Superior, but met with no great success. In 1850, he joined a party, led by Canton Smith, to the gold fields of California, and on this journey met his death. The popular esteem in which he was held was shown by the fact that a public meeting was held in Grand Rapids at the time in honor of his memory. Archibald Salmon was one of the first cabinet-makers. He removed to a farm in Wyoming township, in 1851, dying in 1857. His first shop was on Prospect Hill, and, with William Haldane, he was one of the first chair-makers.

George Young was forty years old when he came to Grand Rapids, having been born in the Netherlands, in 1797. His first home was near Albany, N. Y., and he was the pioneer Dutch settler of Grand Rapids, later being influential in bringing many Hollanders to this vicinity. His home was on a farm just outside of Grand Rapids and he was one of the founders of the First Reformed Church, in 1842, being an earnest supporter of Hart E. Waring, who came as a missionary in that year, and he was one of the first elders of the church. He served as a supervisor from Grand Rapids, in 1841, and was president of the Agricultural Society, in 1851, dying in 1860. James A. Rumsey was a young man of twenty-three years when he came to Grand Rapids, working with Henry Stone for \$15 per month and also helping in the construction of the Big Mill which was the first on the canal bank. His compensation in this work on the mill is said to have been \$1 per day. He later became superintendent of the mill, and in this connection the lack of barrels for flour shipments first started him in the cooper's trade. It is stated that in an emergency he bought a consignment of staves intended for Chicago and constructed flour barrels for the mill, and, later, barrels for packing pork. He was known as a mill operator, having a mill on Plaster Creek and a saw-mill nearby. He was also known as one of the pioneers in the plaster business. Rumsey street was named in his honor. He lived in Grand Rapids to a ripe old age. Orson C. Kellogg came with his father, Truman, and later became prominent as a horticulturist; also as a soldier in the Civil War. Gouverneur B. Rathbun came, in 1837, and was later connected with Amos Rathbone as a merchant on Monroe and Market streets, and, later, on Monroe and Ottawa, in the building known as the "Wedge," which was burned in



1857. He was interested in the establishment of the "Daily Times" at a much later period, but his chief career was that of a merchant. William C. Davidson, who was one of the first trustees of the Division Street Methodist Church, and prominently connected with the early history of the organization, was a newcomer and was one of the contractors who built the stone Catholic Church, in 1849. He was a member of the Board of Supervisors and was marshal of Grand Rapids, in 1852. He was the mason who built the first chimney of Grand Rapids brick which fell into ruins after a heavy rain. Joseph H. Baxter was a carpenter and millwright and one of the pioneer wagon makers, coming from Vermont, in 1837. His business career was varied, including the keeping of a livery stable, a grocery and feed store, and a manufacturer of bed springs. His first home, built on Fountain and Division streets, stood for many years. He was one of the founders of the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company, in 1848; served as constable, in 1850, and it was from him that land was purchased for the Hebrew burial place, in 1857. In 1842 he was associated with Hezekiah Green in a wagon-shop on Ionia street, south of Fountain, and, in 1848, he conducted a livery stable near the "Old National Hotel," before that having been engaged in the meat market business in the basement of what was known as the Faneuil Hall building, on Market street, at Monroe.

Josiah L. Wheeler was another of the pioneers of 1837 and was early recognized by election as one of the trustees of Grand Rapids, in 1840. He was the master mason who built the First Reformed Church, in 1842, and was a supervisor in 1844. In 1858, he put the first gravel roof on a Grand Rapids building and was the first pioneer in this industry, and was well known as among the early masons and brick layers.

John T. Holmes, who was one of those delivering addresses at the unveiling of a monument to Rix Robinson, in 1887, was himself a newcomer, fifty years before. He took a prominent part in the young men's debating club in the early forties, and was one of the founders of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. He was prosecuting attorney in the early fifties. His first work was as a clerk, but he was soon associated with William G. Henry in the mercantile firm of Henry & Holmes. During this time he studied law and was admitted to the bar, in 1843, and served as justice of the peace and master in chancery. He was a leading Democrat and, in 1860, was the unsuccessful nominee of his party for state senator and, in 1862, for Attorney-General of the State. His career as a judge began in 1875 and continued until the early nineties. He was one of the Union Democrats and during the war was strong in his advocacy of the Union cause. He grew to be extremely popular with the people of Grand Rapids and was noted for his kindness and high standard of honor.

William Morman was one whose services were in great demand with the pioneers, as the first maker of lime. He was but twenty-two years of age when he reached Grand Rapids, having been born in England, in 1815. He built the third lime-kiln, by the west bank of the river, and remained in the business for fifty years, being succeeded by his son, S. A. Morman. Samuel F. Butler lived first on Bond street and was one of the early cabinet-makers. He was one of



the incorporators of the Grand Rapids Academy, in 1844, and one of the first deacons of Park Congregational Church. He was also one of the founders of the First Reformed Church and one of its first elders, and was a party to the stormy early history of that organization. He was a prominent member of the Bible Society and assisted with the Bible census of the city, in 1849, reporting that he had "found four persons destitute and unable to purchase Bibles who were tendered a supply." He was a justice of the peace in 1850 and held other minor offices, among which was that of street commissioner. His early cabinet shop was located near the old Bridge Street Hotel, and he was popularly known as "Colonel." John Friend and Eli Johnson were active in the new community, and Noble H. Finney was one of the early real estate men, spoken of as "Colonel Finney" by John Ball in his reminiscences of 1837, and he was an early nominee for representative on the Democratic ticket. He was one of the school committeemen, in 1837, and his early location was at the corner where the Morton House now stands. One of the most important of the new settlers was Truman H. Lyon. He was a cousin of Lucius Lyon and was early known as the host of the Bridge Street Hotel and also of the tavern at Lyons. He was one of the early assessors and his name is frequently mentioned as one of the licensed tavern keepers. He was a native of Vermont and became prominent in the politics of the city, serving as postmaster and in the State legislature. The brick block which he erected on old Canal street, in 1856, was the pride of Grand Rapids in its day, and was the home of the Masonic fraternity, of which he was a prominent member. During the Washingtonian movement, in 1842, he created a great sensation by closing the bar of the Bridge Street Hotel, running it ever after as a temperance house, which was very unusual at that date. He was a member of the School Board when the first stone school-house was built, in 1849, and was an incorporator of the Grand Rapids Academy, in 1844. He served as postmaster from 1845 to 1849, and from 1853 to 1857. He also served as a member of the Board of Supervisors and was interested for some time in the manufacture of salt. Another venture was his purchase of the Grand Rapids woolen factory from Stephen Hinsdill, in 1845, manufacturing "cassimeres, satinets, flannels and other cloths." He enlarged the factory but sold it, in 1853, to D. P. Nickerson. His cottage, erected in 1845, on Fulton street near Lafayette, was one of the most attractive of the early dwellings. In 1857, he erected a four-story brick block on Lyon street which was considered a real skyscraper. An important addition to the Grand Rapids settlement was Charles I. Walker, who came as a young New Yorker, twenty-three years of age. He was well educated and had made his first journey to Michigan, in 1834, stopping at St. Joseph. His first operations in Grand Rapids were in land investments. He suffered with other victims of hard times. He succeeded Mr. Pattison as editor of the Grand River Times, held many city offices, and was representative from Ottawa, Ionia, and Kent counties, in 1840. He returned to Massachusetts, where he lived for ten years, when he again came to Michigan, living at Detroit, where he became noted as a jurist, historian and philanthropist. He was an early Democrat, but was always known as an



anti-slavery man, and during his stay in Grand Rapids was one of its most influential citizens. He was the first treasurer of Grand Rapids and his first study of law was in the office of George Martin. But little of importance seems to have happened in the early town government of 1837. Meetings of the board were held at the home of Hiram Hinsdill. Sylvester Granger was clerk and George Martin was justice of the peace.

Andrew Watson, later a supervisor, was one of the pioneers of Cannon township, while Alexander Clark was a pioneer of Gaines township. In Alpine township, Solomon Wright, a graduate of Williams college, in Massachusetts, pre-empted eighty acres in the southwest part of the township, and with him came his sons—Benjamin, Solomon, Noadiah, Andrew and Jeremiah. They were the first American settlers in this township, but were preceded by Peter Labelle, Joseph Genie and another French settler who located a mill on Government land. James and Francis Blood were also pioneers of Alpine, this year. At Ada, the new settlers were J. W. Fish, Digby V. Bell, John and Willis Craw, Putnam Hill, Rix and Lot Church, Enoch Price, Minos Gypson, William Slawson, Perry and Loan Bill, and Charles Robinson. A village was platted at the mouth of the Thornapple river and the town was booming although, in the years immediately succeeding, many of the lots were sold for taxes. In Paris township, Solomon White, later president of the Agricultural Society, was a settler of this year, as was also H. H. Allen, who experienced many difficulties in establishing himself, and of whom it is related that, in the winter of 1842-43, he chopped oak trees for his cattle to browse on and thus by spring had not only saved his cattle but had a number of acres of land partially cleared. He was supervisor for Paris township, in 1842, and one of the county supervisors of the poor in the early sixties. John Kirkland, later of Grand Rapids, first settled in Paris township, in 1837. At Plainfield, George Miller was the pioneer, being later joined by James Clark, Thomas Friant and Warner Dexter. The Indians were their only neighbors and they lived Indian fashion, pounding the grain into flour or grinding it in a coffee mill, and secured their meat by hunting. They were soon joined by C. Friant, Zena Whitney, and Daniel North, and the village became noted for the manufacture of shingles and lumber. The town of Walker was created by the legislature, Dec. 30, 1837, and included all of Kent County north of Grand River, but its organization was not effected until the following year. The new steamer, Governor Mason, was running on the Grand River for the first time, this year, and the great feature of the Fourth of July celebration was an excursion to Grandville. The Governor Mason was built by James Short for Richard Godfroy, and this was her initial trip. Governor Stevens T. Mason, for whom the boat was named, presented it with a stand of colors. William Stoddard was its first commander. The trip up the river to Lyons was the occasion of great rejoicing, and Alanson Cranston, the bugler who announced the coming of the canal workers, in 1835, awakened the echoes along the river on this memorable journey. The engine of this boat was taken from the wreck of the ship, Don Quixote. Other boats on the river this year were the Owashtanong, owned at Grand Haven and commanded by Capt. Thomas W. White, and the Cinderella, a pole boat, built at Grandville.



The custom of a river excursion on July Fourth became one of the features of the annual celebrations, and it should be noted in passing that in the early days no anniversary of the United States birth was allowed to go uncelebrated. Louis Campau and Joel Guild were the first celebrants on record, in 1833. In 1834, Robert M. Barr with his fiddle led the parade. Many Indians, among whom was Chief Blackskin, joined in the rejoicing. They also had a river excursion, but in bateaux and not a steamer. Speech-making and general merriment were the features of the celebration of 1835, while the whole settlement joined in the Fourth of July dinner, in 1836. Much interest was taken in politics, and at the election the steamboat, Governor Mason, brought the voters from Muskegon and Grand Haven, and of this election Thomas D. Gilbert said: "I well remember making the journey from Grand Haven to Grand Rapids, in 1835, to cast my first vote at the election that enrolled Michigan in the sisterhood of States. I do not think Muskegon was represented in the boat load of about fifty Democrats and three Whigs, who attended the election. Stevens T. Mason, the first Governor of Michigan, was elected by an overwhelming majority."

No public provision was made for the poor, as all were rich, either in money, or energy and youth. The plaster industry had not been developed, but the Big Mill was put in operation, as was the first saw-mill on the east side of the canal, which was built by R. H. Bridge and James M. Nelson, at the north end of the Big Mill. It was the intention to make this a very considerable concern, but the panic of 1837 prevented. W. H. Withey had a mill, constructed by H. H. Ives, above the Rapids; Samuel White & Sons and James M. and George C. Nelson also built saw-mills. The foundry established by W. S. Levake on the corner of Mill and Bridge streets was the only one in operation. W. N. Haldane established himself on the corner of Pearl and Ottawa streets and at his home began to make furniture which he "swapped" for other necessities. This year Samuel F. Butler, on Bridge street, and Archibald Salmon, on Prospect Hill, started as cabinet makers, and these three may be considered as the pioneers of the great furniture industry of Grand Rapids. There was practically no ready-made clothing and Charles H. Taylor was the pioneer tailor of the community. The ranks of this trade were soon joined by Edward S. Marsh, William A. Blackney, H. K. Rose, J. M. Stanly, John Mathison, B. S. Hanchett, J. C. Lowell and James W. Sligh. John Beach was the house-painter, John Davis and Solomon Withey, the brick makers, and the Ringuette brothers the shoemakers. Isaac Watson began the making of harness and John Kirkland was the cooper. The boat building industry was well represented, by such ship carpenters as Parish, Short, Corbin, Meddler, McAllister and Jennings, while Abel Page, Truman Kellogg and John Almy were the envy of all for their fine gardens. There was much talk of improving highways, but little was accomplished, and the roads were chiefly trails. An appropriation of \$3,500 had been made by Congress, in 1832, for a road from Detroit to the mouth of the Grand River, but this was entirely insufficient and the work was chiefly done by the pioneers themselves. The river was crossed on the ice in winter and at the Fulton street ford at times of low water



in the summer; a foot bridge, made by stringing planks on wooden horses, providing a rather unsafe passage. Concerning the early roads and trails, Mr. Baxter says in his history: "Naturally, the first wagon roads to the village came in, by or near those paths which the Indians had trod, and were correspondingly crooked; and for some years little or nothing was done to straighten and improve them except by private enterprise. The Thornapple road came in by the trail to Fulton street and down a ravine toward the junction of Jefferson avenue and State street. The Bostwick Road, as it was called, came in from the direction of Green Lake, its entrance being about where now is the State street line. From the southward, the early farmers drove in by way of the present site of the fair ground, and along the edge of the dry land some distance east of Division street. A road from the southern part of the county, or that portion of it west of the Division street line, proceeded southward, joining another that came up the river, and formed the one which is still known as the Grandville Road." The streets of the village could be called roads, by courtesy only. In front of business houses which centered on what was then Monroe, old Canal (from the northerly portion of Monroe avenue), and Waterloo streets, there were plank walks, some of them as much as eight feet wide, but in wet weather the roads were practically impassable. Monroe street was platted diagonally, as Louis Campau insisted that it follow the old Indian trail as nearly as possible, and it led to the foot of the vanished Prospect Hill. This plat was for the village of Grand Rapids and was made in 1833, comprising the south half of the northeast quarter of section 25, and was bounded on the west by the river, on the south by Fulton street, on the east by Division street, and on the north by a line between Pearl and Lyon streets. The village of Kent was platted by John Almy for the Kent Company, in 1836. This tract rested upon the river to the west and was bounded on the south by Wealthy street, on the east by Ransom street and on the north by Coldbrook. Old Canal street was laid out 100 feet in width, from Pearl to Michigan street, and beyond that at ninety-two feet. East Bridge, now Michigan street, was 100 feet wide to the top of the hill, and Monroe street was to be a trifle over eighty-two feet wide; the width of the remaining streets was sixty-six feet. Kent and Grand Rapids plats did not "jibe," and on account of the antagonism there was much dispute, neither side being willing to change its plat. This accounts for the irregular streets in the central part of the city. Real estate prices boomed during this year and the pioneer builders, including Eliphalet H. Turner, W. H. Hilton, Leonard Covell, J. M. Haldane, H. H. Ives, David Burnett, Kendall Woodward and David Covell were kept busy, as were also the masons—James McCrath, Patrick McGurrin, Louis and William Davidson, S. S. Stewart, Ebenezer Anderson, Josiah H. Wheeler, Isaac Leonard, and others. The population of the county, according to the census of 1837, was 2,022. Ottawa, Kent, Ionia and Clinton counties were in one representative district and there were but five organized townships in the four counties. In Ottawa there were no organized townships; in Kent, Byron township was composed of townships five and six north, and Kent township comprised the rest of Kent county, south of Grand River. North of the Grand River the lands were still unsurveyed. In Ionia County, Maple was the

only township, and in Clinton, DeWitt. It was during the boom days that Judge Jefferson Morrison built the residence on Monroe and Ottawa streets which he dubbed "Morrison's Folly." He is said to have gone in debt to the extent of \$5,000 to erect this fine home which he sold to Louis Campau for \$6,000, taking in paying four lots at \$1,500 each, and Capt. Gunnison, who was the purchaser of the home, bought it of Campau for \$700. With this we may well close the history of the year 1837, which was but a continuation of the boom of 1836, and saw Grand Rapids well established as the leading settlement of Western Michigan and the scene of the most extensive private improvements which had then been undertaken in Michigan, west of Detroit.



## CHAPTER VI.

### LUCIUS LYON AND HIS ACTIVITIES

LYON'S CHARACTERISTICS—AN ATTRACTIVE FIGURE—LETTERS—INTEREST IN INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS—POLITICAL SUCCESSES AND DEFEATS—HIS INTERESTS IN GRAND RAPIDS—SUGAR BEET CULTURE—FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES—SALT WELLS—OFFICIAL ACTS—MICHIGAN PROSPECTS IN 1845—LYON'S DEATH.

It is to be hoped that some day someone will write an adequate biography of Senator Lucius Lyon. He was a great man; one of those who look so far and so clearly into the future that they vision it as the present. Here was his error and his undoing. It took many years for the march of events to catch up with him. In the meantime, his personal interests were lost, although the objects which he sought, and the possibilities which to him were certainties, were accomplished. Next to Lewis Cass no man did more for the development of Michigan than Lucius Lyon. Many of his letters are in existence, some published and some unpublished. They show how very human he was, how friendly, how true, how trustworthy. They show a wonderful versatility and a curious blending of the practical and the impractical. Who, but Lucius Lyon, would have sent men to dig a canal, suitable to furnish power for a city of many thousands, into a wilderness and to a village whose inhabitants numbered less than one hundred? Who, but Lucius Lyon, would have persisted in the development of the salt wells where the State had failed? Who, but Lucius Lyon, would have foreseen the possibility of the harvesting machine, and of sugar beet culture? He traveled through the wilderness of stream and forest, which was the Northwest, and everywhere his imagination clothed it with the habiliments of the future. He saw cities where wigwams were; filled the upper peninsula with rich and inexhaustible mines; and, undoubtedly, saw Grand Rapids as it is today, the premier city of Western Michigan—one of the first fifty in this great country of considerably more than one hundred million population. This led him to invest in many ventures, for his eye was single to the future. He was right, but he was almost as far ahead of his times as the man who first declared the world was round. He suffered the penalty. Genius often goes wrong (Mark Twain lost a fortune on a typesetting machine, which was the forerunner of the successful machines of today).

Lucius Lyon presents a most attractive figure to the historian. Still a young man, he had tasted poverty and hardship as well as success and adulation. As a representative of a new State in the United States Senate he was received, and made much of, by the best society which the Republic afforded. He was the friend of Presidents, the companion of cabinet ministers and ambassadors, the associate of statesmen, and the beaux ideal of the fair women who constituted the young society of the Nation's capital. At the same time he had fellow-

ship, sympathy and friendship with the hardy pioneers, and his active brain was ever busy with plans for the development of his beloved State of Michigan.

It is characteristic of this man, who lived almost wholly in the future, that he never married; that he failed of re-election; that his great plans either failed or were carried out by others; that he died in comparative poverty; and that he lives only as a memory, with the name of a city and the name of a street, to remind us of the greatness that was his. As a force for publicity, Lucius Lyon was by far the greatest single factor in Grand Rapids' early development. His position as United States senator gave weight and prestige to his words, and he was thus able to direct the attention of many enterprises and many men, not only to Michigan, but to Grand Rapids. There are many references to Grand Rapids in his published letters, all of which throw strong sidelights upon history, give vivid views of persons, conditions and possibilities in the region then so little known, now one of the best known in the whole country, and at the risk of digression and somewhat in anticipation of the story of Grand Rapids' development there are here included a number of his references to the Grand River Valley.

In a letter to his sister, in 1838, speaking of Michigan towns, after assuring her that there was no occasion for fear of Indian raids at Lyons, he said: "One of these is Grand Rapids, the county seat of Kent county, on the Grand River, about fifty miles below Lyons. The first house was built about four years ago, and it now contains a population of about one thousand persons, or is about one-third that of Burlington [Vermont]; and within ten years it will unquestionably be larger than Burlington ever can be. I am one of the proprietors of the town. There is already an Episcopal society organized there. The society is very good and it is daily improving. A branch of the State University has lately been located there, and there is a department in it for the education of young ladies in the higher branches. There is a society of Roman Catholics and a church erected for them."

Mr. Lyon wrote to David Carver, Feb. 28, 1836: " \* \* \* I am glad to learn that you have made arrangements to run a vessel weekly from Chicago to the mouth of the Grand River. I have no doubt a steamboat would do very well next summer on the same route. N. O. Sargeant and Richard Godfroy, of the village of Kent [Grand Rapids], and some other gentlemen are now making provision for a steamboat to run regularly next summer from Kent to the mouth of the river. Another light steamboat will be placed on the river above the falls, some time next summer, so as to form a regular line of travel from Detroit to the mouth of the Grand River and thence to Chicago, Milwaukee or wherever the lake steamboats or vessels can be found to carry passengers."

To General Burdick, of Detroit, he wrote relative to the internal improvements: "We want very much some way of getting out east from Grand Rapids, and I hope the first portion of the Northern railroad put under contract will be that from the timbered land from Lyons east about twenty-five miles. I suppose it will be necessary to commence the road at the east and work on west." On Feb. 5, 1838, he



transmitted to the postoffice department a certificate that John Almy had carried the mail between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo up to the first of January.

Mr. Lyon was defeated for re-election to the Senate, in 1839, and, quite naturally, his letters lose some of their optimistic tone. He wrote to W. A. Richmond, of Grand Rapids, March 10, 1839: "I am sorry to inform you that the bill to create an additional land office in Michigan and to remove the Ionia office to the Rapids of the Grand River, though it passed the Senate in the early part of the session, has failed to pass the House. All our other bills for the benefit of Michigan have also failed in the House after having passed the Senate." In a letter to James W. Taber he encloses a small package of sugar-beet seed, together with seeds of two kinds of English beans and four watermelon seeds, thus becoming one of the pioneers of an industry which is now so important.

To Nathan Rice he wrote, soon after his defeat for the Senate: "I mean to attend to my own business now, make money, and then in three or four years live like a gentleman, unless, in the meantime, the people elect me to some rascally office, which folly I hope they will avoid." At this time he became interested in a harvesting machine, shipping one of the machines by the brig Virginia, from Rochester to St. Joseph. He also purchased a quantity of sugar-beet seed from France, intending to plant from twenty to twenty-five acres. He became greatly interested in Moore & Haskell's harvester, which he said "harvested sixty-three acres of wheat on Prairie Ronde in a very superior style, at the rate of twenty acres per day."

In December, 1839, he executed a contract relative to his interest at Grand Rapids, as follows: "I will assign my right to build a dam across Grand River to Mr. Ball and his assigns, and will deed to him sufficient land at some proper and convenient place on which to erect said dam and to construct a canal or race for it to a proper site for a flouring mill; and will deed to him, at such site, land sufficient for the erection of said mill, and also land equal to six village lots in the village of Lyons, on which he may erect other buildings; and I will convey to him the right of using water to turn as many pairs of mill-stones for flouring as he may wish to run, not exceeding six in number, on condition that he will construct a good, substantial and permanent dam across said river, high enough to have at least six feet fall of water at ordinary times, where the mill will be erected, and will construct a good canal or race from said mill and will erect said mill in a good, substantial, permanent and workmanlike manner and finish it off complete, so that it will do as good work as any flouring mill on Grand River—the mill to be painted and to be at least three stories high, and the dam and race to be so constructed that whenever I or my assigns may want to use the water power created thereby the whole water of the Grand River in an ordinary stage of the river may be used through said race, if necessary, without any expense on our part. The lock shall be constructed at the expense of said Ball, whenever it may be required by the public, all to be so completed that one good run of stone shall be in operation for grinding grain within one year and three run of stone shall be in operation within two years."



From Grand Rapids he wrote, in 1840: "We see pretty dull, hard times here; though, as we have enough to eat and drink, we are not quite as badly off as we have been here for the last two years. I had hopes that before this time the State would have tested the salt springs in this vicinity, and that the manufacture of salt would have been established so as to bring a little money into this part of the country, but the work has been entirely suspended for the last five or six months, and there is no probability that anything more will be done by the State in the matter. The consequence is that the sum of \$10,000 or \$12,000, which has been laid out at the springs, will be lost, and the question whether salt can be manufactured here or not will remain undecided, unless private enterprise shall determine it. This question is so important to the people of Grand Rapids and of this section of the State that I am determined to have it solved. I believe that good salt water may be obtained by boring deep enough, at almost any point on Grand River, as well as at the salt springs; and if you will send on to me, or to Judge Almy, one-half the necessary money I will furnish the other half immediately and we will try the experiment and see if salt cannot be procured and manufactured at this place. \* \* \* It will not cost over \$4,000 or \$5,000 to sink a well on the rapids to the depth of 700 feet."

Writing to Edward Lyon in January, 1840, he said: "I have met George Ketchum, who has erected and finished off complete at Grandville a better mill than Mr. Ball will have at Owosso, when his is finished, and has now three run of stone and eight bolts in operation, ready to do as good merchant work as can be done in the United States. Mr. Ketchum's mill is 40 x 50, the same size as Mr. Ball's and is calculated to have in it five run of stone as soon as the two additional run are needed; and the whole dam, race, mill and all things complete cost about \$12,000."

On the same date he wrote to Gen. John McNeil, relative to Michigan conditions, giving a full review of the state of the territory at that time. This was in part as follows: "I consider the condition of Michigan as now better than it has been since the commencement of the career of speculation which brought so much disaster and ruin on the country, though others may entertain a different opinion. We have, it is true, less money in the State in proportion to the population than we have ever had, less even than we had a year ago; and those who are compelled to pay their debts now must suffer great sacrifice, and many will be ruined entirely. Prices have fallen so much that it is impossible to tell the value of anything. The average price of wheat throughout the State may be perhaps 55 or 60 cents per bushel and first-rate fresh pork, in the hog, \$3.50 to \$4.00 per cwt. Last year and for several years past wheat has been from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per bushel and mess pork from \$25 to \$40 per barrel. Three years ago this State was paying to the State of Ohio \$500,000 for flour and \$400,000 a year for pork, and at the same time we were paying to the city of New York about \$2,000,000 annually for drygoods and groceries, and to the States of Massachusetts and Vermont about \$500,000 for boots and shoes, besides paying to New York about \$250,000 annually for salt, making the whole amount of foreign debt contracted by our citizens about \$3,650,000 annually. To meet the



payment of this large amount of debt, we had no other resource than the money brought into this State by immigrants from other States, so that when immigration ceased, about the time of the suspension of the banks, in 1837, the money then in the State was soon drained off and we were left exhausted. During the time when it was going, however, we made an effort to relieve ourselves, temporarily, by a resort to banking; but this ended—as all attempts have done and will always do when banks are not founded on real capital—in leaving the people worse off than they were before. Finding at last that all speculation was at an end, the people of the State went to work and in two years succeeding the year 1837, instead of having to pay half a million of dollars to Ohio for flour, they had last year a surplus of a million and a half to sell themselves; and this year, at the same price, our surplus of pork would bring us three millions. Even at the present low prices the surplus which we have on hand of these two articles must bring us, whenever sold, at least a million and a half. In the meantime, our consumption of drygoods and groceries has decreased more than one-half, and we begin to manufacture leather, so that the amount we pay out for boots and shoes is not more than half as great as it was three years ago. On the whole, our condition now, if we were free from the old debt hanging over us, would be pretty good. This will be paid slowly, and in four or five years from this time we shall be nearly free from debt and have as ample resources as any people in the United States, in proportion to our population. All political economists agree that labor is the chief if not the only source of wealth, and the labor of the people of this State has within the last three years nearly doubled its actual wealth, though money, the common measure of wealth, has decreased in amount. We have now twice as many acres of improved land as we had then. We have twice as many rods of fence, twice as many flouring mills, three times as much wheat, and twice as many cattle, hogs, horses and sheep. All this is real, substantial capital, and will bring money into the country, by and by, if not at present. The value of land has been reduced very low, and it cannot, in fact, be sold at any price at present. In villages the fall in prices has been generally greater than in farming lands, and even where sales have been made in good faith nobody thinks of making payment. My share of the sales made at Grand Rapids amounts to something like \$20,000, but I cannot get one dollar of it, though about half of it is ultimately secure. I have commenced an operation, however, which, if successful, and I have little doubt it will be, will double the value of that property and make it salable. I am sinking a well for salt water directly on the rapids, and expect to get salt water sufficiently strong to make it profitable manufacturing salt there, by boring down about 500 feet into the rocks. The experiment will have been tested in about six months from this time, and I shall be much disappointed if I have not the pleasure of announcing to you its complete success. \* \* \* You enquire about the health of Michigan. It has been good during the last summer and fall. Even the fever and ague has hardly made its appearance at all, though last year many were sick with it.”

In April, 1840, while on a visit to New England, he writes urging the employment by Michigan of an instructor in sugar beet cul-



ture. On June 23, 1840, he wrote Rev. Luman Foote: "The place that I now claim as my residence is Grand Rapids, in Kent County, about 200 miles northwest from Detroit, as the road runs. I am not there much yet, but shall, probably, live there a considerable portion of each year hereafter. Nearly all my property (what I have left after losing a great deal by bad debts and by being bondsman and endorser for others) is situated there and I should like very much to have you located at Grand Rapids also. The place now contains about 1,000 inhabitants, but its situation and advantages are such that it must within ten years be the third if not the second town in the state in point of size and importance. We have at present an Episcopal clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Hoyt, and we are erecting a small plain church for him; but I doubt whether he will remain with us more than a year or two."

The Senator was much interested in politics, and the great victory scored by the Whigs, in 1840, was not at all acceptable to him. Prior to the election he estimated the Democratic majority in Ionia, Kent and Ottawa Counties at 150, but said that there was some dissatisfaction with legislative nominations and the Democrats might lose the legislature on joint ballot. He added, in a letter to Sidney Smith, that Jacob M. Howard was to address the people at Grand Rapids on the 23d of October and "Alpheus Felch will be there on the 28th," indicating the political activities of the time. Following the election he said: "The political news is certainly worse than was expected. Harrison's majority is reported to be, in Ionia County, 47; in Clinton County something, but not known; in Ottawa, Van Buren's majority is reported to be 6; in Kent County, 2." In December, of the same year, he put in a bid for sinking the salt well at the State works on Grand River, at \$19 per foot, which Dr. Houghton said was the lowest bid.

As witnessing the many sided interests of the man is a letter stating that he forwarded two papers containing four seeds each of the "Billindean Cabbage," said to have grown eleven feet high and fifty-seven feet in circumference. For these seeds he paid six pence apiece, but he adds: "I think the chances are about three to one that I have been humbugged, and that the seeds are only the seeds of the common cabbage; however, please have them planted and see what they come to." In a letter to George A. Robinson, in March, 1841, he regrets the delay at the salt well caused by a drill dropping into the well and states that the Governor has approved his contract for the State well and that he has written to Anthony Marvin to come out and commence operations on it in April.

On May 12, 1841, he wrote to Asa Lyon, of Vermont: "Truman H. Lyon removed last month to Grand Rapids, where he now keeps the public house called the Exchange. There is not much travel and consequently not much for him to do there at present, but he hopes that business will revive by and by, especially if I should succeed in manufacturing salt profitably from the well that I have sunk here. My men began the well in January, 1840, and have now got down to the depth of 550 feet, or within 50 feet of the level of the ocean. They have been working night and day and have drilled the whole distance through lime rock, sandstone, plaster or gypsum



and clay slate. They will probably go to the depth of 700 feet before they stop, though they have got salt water now stronger than I expected to obtain when I began, and so strong that if it should prove to be sufficiently abundant, salt can be manufactured from it with a good profit."

The hard times had affected Mr. Lyon and, in January, 1841, he wrote to Isaac E. Crary: "You will see by the accompanying map that the limits described in the mortgage embrace about 334 lots in said village of Grand Rapids, but from this number there must be deducted 95 lots sold within said limits during the years 1836-7-8 and up to June 26, 1839, which leaves 249 lots unsold. To give some idea of the value of these lots, I will observe that the whole number of lots sold by Judge Carroll and myself in that part of the village north of Campau's plat during the time mentioned was 145, including the 95 above deducted, and the amount for which they were sold was \$106,156.89, averaging about \$782 per lot. Of this amount we have received \$41,185.79, all of which has been reinvested in buildings and improvements on the lots unsold, and there still remains a balance due of \$64,971." To add to his troubles, in July, 1841, a verdict was rendered against him and Calvin Britain for \$13,056, as sureties for Allen Hutchins, deceased, who had been receiver at the Ionia land office, but in spite of this he purchased the one-half interest in the Moore & Hascall patents for harvesting machines. He also urged Arthur Bronson to take an interest in these patents, but Mr. Bronson declined.

The proposition of the prosecution of the State improvements at the Rapids of Grand River was then of vital interest to the inhabitants, and Mr. Lyon wrote to C. H. Taylor, on Sept. 8, 1841, saying: "You will recollect that I expressed to yourself and Mr. Walker the opinion that the Board of Internal Improvement did not intend to give the Grand River country the benefit of the appropriation of \$25,000 for a canal around the rapids, and that their real object in all their movements was to throw the responsibility and odium of procrastinating and defeating the work on the shoulders of others. This is now placed beyond all doubt, as you will see by the communication of William Foster in the Free Press of today. Mr. Foster has omitted to state one of the objections and the most important one made by the acting commissioner to going on with the work, which was the lack of funds. The commissioner evidently supposed the objection raised on account of the contract made by Judge Almy and myself with Granger & Ball would be fatal to the work and justify them in refusing to proceed with it, but when Mr. Foster returned and informed them, much to their surprise, and probably much to their annoyance, that he had made arrangements so as to completely obviate that difficulty, they found it necessary to start another and one that had never been mentioned before—the want of funds. The acting commissioner said it was impossible to do anything in the matter unless the contractor would take the warrants of the treasurer in payment, for they had no money applicable to that purpose. 'Very well,' said Mr. Foster, 'I will take the warrants of the treasurer at my own risk.' The judge, then finding all his objections completely obviated, was silenced and could say no more, excepting a suggestion that the work might possibly amount to more than the appropriation.



This objection being disposed of by Mr. Foster offering to cut down his price so as, in any event, to come within the means at the disposal of the board, Mr. Germain had to come to the relief of his colleague and to state positively that he could never agree to pay anything for the right-of-way and for the work that we proposed to surrender. 'Very well,' said Mr. Foster, 'I will pay for it. Take the amount out of my pay. I shall not be able to make a single dollar on my contract, but I want to commence business at Grand Rapids with a view to fix my residence there, and I am determined to go on with the work now, even though I may lose money by so doing.' The commissioners then, after consulting together, told Mr. Foster that they had determined not to let the contract for the work unless the State could have the water power in addition to all that had been offered them. This modest requisition has not been mentioned to me, and I presume it will not be by them; but I understand it is now the only thing they want to enable them to decide on letting the contract. Please mention this to Squire Almy and tell him if he will agree to it I will then decide what I will do." Later he writes T. H. Lyon that Rix Robinson tells him that plenty of wood can be got, delivered on the ground at the salt works for 50 cents per cord, that he can hire any quantity cut on the banks of the river above for 25 cents, and he thinks it cannot cost more than a shilling a cord to bring it down in scows as soon as boats can enter the canal, which he hopes may be soon. Later, he writes of an attempt to interest manufacturers at Syracuse, N. Y., to "transfer their kettles and capital to Grand Rapids," and gives instructions as to the work.

An interesting bit of history is found in his letter concerning the validity of a pre-emption claim of Lovell Moore upon 160 acres in Grand Rapids upon which the Missionary Society had erected buildings. In this regard Mr. Lyon wrote: "In 1838, certain lands were advertised to be sold, including this tract. Mr. Moore presented his proof for a part of this tract and tendered payment, but it was rejected, probably because the land was supposed to have been reserved for missionaries. Mr. Slater's claim under pre-emption laws must fail, because his improvements were made before the Indian title was extinguished. Mr. Slater was a Baptist missionary and occupied for some years one or two log buildings erected on said land by Rev. Mr. McCoy, about 1828. When the Indians, among whom Mr. Slater was working, sold their lands by the treaty of 1836, Mr. Slater abandoned the premises, purchased lands for his society in the county of Barry, about 40 miles from there, and has since resided there. Mr. Moore took possession of the premises thus abandoned, without opposition from any source, and continued to occupy and improve the same until his pre-emption claim was rejected, intending all the time to purchase the land he lived on whenever it should be sold by the United States. The lands claimed by him are worth now at least \$1,000."

In October, Senator Lyon contracted with George French, of Plainfield township, for 400 cords of wood, delivered at the salt works, at 87½ cents per cord, and, in November, he reported work on the State well, estimating the cost of going to the depth of 700 feet at \$6,000 additional, and complaining that he could not get from the State money due him.



A letter, dated Dec. 8, 1841, tells of a Grand Rapids wedding as follows: \* \* \* "George A. Robinson was married on Wednesday evening, the 1st, at 7 o'clock P. M., to Miss Julia A. Withey, daughter of Gen. Solomon Withey, late sheriff of this county. They were married by the Rev. Mr. Ballard. Gen. Withey's family, Lucius Thayer and myself were the only persons present, excepting Miss Sargeant and Mr. and Mrs. Ballard."

He reported to Dr. Houghton, State geologist, that the State salt well had reached 305 feet with a strong flow of salt water, and added: "One of my men on my request took my rubber cloak and wrapped it around the top of the cast iron tube in such a manner as to discharge the water through the sleeve of the cloak into a large barrel. With considerable leakage and waste the flow was so strong that the barrel was filled four times in one minute, or at the rate of 130 gallons per minute. \* \* \* Judging from the taste, 200 gallons of the water will yield a bushel of salt." On Dec. 27, 1841, Senator Lyon leased the salt works to Truman H. Lyon for two years, Truman to operate the works and to pay him 80 per cent. of all net profits.

On Feb. 3, 1842, there is record of a contract of conveyance of one undivided half part of lots 194 and 195, fronting on Michigan and Ottawa streets, to the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, for the purpose of a church building, the consideration being that the society should, within a year, construct a building of stone, 38 feet wide and 50 feet deep, and to have it ready for the roof when the deed was to be delivered.

Relative to the plaster mills, Mr. Lyon said, Feb. 4, 1842: "At this place and near it there are inexhaustible quarries of it from 5 to 15 feet in thickness and of the very purest quality. Granger & Ball, merchants of this place, have now finished and in operation a very fine mill for grinding plaster at the quarry on Plaster Creek, two miles south of here, where they are ready to sell any quality of ground plaster for \$4 per ton in bulk without barrels."

To Rev. James Ballard, the same year he wrote that he soon expected to manufacture salt at a cost not exceeding 18 cents per bushel, and he added, concerning the Grand River Valley: "This, with our inexhaustible quarries of gypsum, our fertile soil, beautiful springs, valuable pine timber, great water power and steamboat navigation above and below Grand Rapids, ought to be sufficient to insure to the Grand River country a rapid increase of population whenever the advantages become known."

Again his interest is shown in the building of the bridge over Grand River and he tells of a meeting at the Grand River Exchange at which Daniel Ball was chairman. On motion of James Scribner it was resolved to advertise for building a bridge of timber and plank on the Bridge street line, or within half a mile of the same, to be completed by Sept. 1, 1842. In March, he offers to continue digging the State salt well upon certain conditions, and also orders supplies for the continuation of the work on his own well; and a few weeks later there is the following: "Received, Grand Rapids, May 5, 1842, of Chas. Trowbridge, Esq., of Detroit, \$2 for the first barrel of salt ever sold by me from the Grand Rapids Salt Works, being some of the first salt ever manufactured for sale in the State of Michigan. Lucius Lyon."



Shortly before this he recommended Henry R. Williams for appointment as receiver of the Ionia land office, saying: "Mr. Williams has for a year or more been connected in business with the house of Granger & Ball, who are doing more mercantile and milling business than all of the people in this portion of the State. They have large establishments at Ionia and here, and his business talent, strict honor and high respectability are well known to all our people."

Concerning one for whom he had invested, he said, in May, 1842: "So great has been the depreciation in the value of all real estate in this county that these lots could not be sold now for one-half and perhaps not for one-third of the amount that I received for them, though at the time when I conveyed them I could have sold them for nearly if not quite double the amount that she paid me. As she trusted entirely to me to make a judicious investment and I have made one that has turned out so badly, I feel bound by every principle of justice and honor to refund the money received, together with interest, and I shall do so as soon as I am able. I cannot state now when that will be, for misfortune and change in money matters throughout the country have swept away all my property, so that I have nothing left to help myself. I am not discouraged, however, and if I live you shall be paid."

Despite these hard times, he wrote to Frederick Bronson, in June the same year: "There begins to be more inquiry for land and especially for water power than there has been for several years. Our farmers are increasing their flocks of sheep very rapidly and woollen manufacturers are looking for sites for manufacturing. There is also more immigration to this part of Michigan and more disposition to immigrate manifested than I have witnessed for a long time, so that on the whole our prospects appear to be brighter. I have not yet got my salt works in full operation, but I have done enough at making salt in a small way to test the experiment and to prove that its manufacture can be carried on here at a fair profit." The next month he reported that "the State well is down 660 feet and says that 16 gallons from the top of the well yielded fifty ounces of salt." He states that his own well is not very prosperous, as after operating the works a fortnight and evaporating at least 850 gallons of water every 24 hours, it was found that only 300 bushels of salt was made. He states that manufacturing has been stopped until stronger brine can be procured. He does not give up hope, however, and states that he should like to be the first to erect a graduation house which is "entirely unknown on this continent."

In August, he urges the establishment of a mail route from Battle Creek to Grand Rapids by which mail will be delivered 30 hours earlier, and he also writes: "I think the prospects of our little village of Grand Rapids are as good for the future as those of any other place in the State. The members of the bar here cannot live by their profession and they all resort more or less to other business for support. The price of land has fallen very much throughout all the western countries. Unimproved land of the best quality can be bought now almost anywhere for \$1.50 to \$2.50 per acre, even where the country is partly settled. We are recovering slowly and surely from the evil effect of the paper-money expansion of 1834-5-6, and I think Michigan is now in much better condition than New York. Our



farmers are doing much better than farmers are in New York or any of the Eastern States, because we can afford to raise wheat and wool at present prices and make half profits at them, while their farmers cannot make anything. Michigan is remarkably healthy this year. I have not heard of a single case of sickness in the whole State for ten months past and we never have any other disease than fever and ague at any time."

It would seem that Horace Greeley was not the only one who advised young men to go west, for, in 1842, Senator Lyon wrote to James Gordon Bennett, editor of the New York Herald, as follows: "In the last number of your paper received here I see you advise the poor immigrants who are returning to Europe because they can get no work in New York to go to the West, those who have money, and purchase farms. This is excellent advice, both to those who have money and to those who have none; because all can get plenty of work here and fair wages, which will enable them in a short time to purchase small farms, whether they have money when they arrive here or not. Many of the most prosperous and independent farmers of this country came here less than six years ago, without a dollar in their pockets, and now they have land, cattle, horses, sheep and hogs in abundance, and some of them, by the labor of themselves and family alone, produce 500 to 2,000 bushels of wheat for sale every year, and hardly any one less than 100 bushels, besides a large quantity of other grains. It would do your heart good to see the prosperity of these industrious immigrants who came here penniless and are now on the road to wealth. Let those who think of returning to Europe come here directly. We will receive them with open arms and do everything in our power to aid them in settling among us and planning homes for their families in one of the finest and most healthy countries on the globe. A society has been organized here for that purpose. Application for any further information may be made either to the officers of the society or to James Scribner, chairman of the committee, residing at Grand Rapids. Our village is situated on the Grand River of Lake Michigan, 30 miles east from the lake shore and 84 miles north from the northern boundary of the State of Indiana, and is destined, as all admit, to be the second, if not the first town in the State. Like the country around it, it is growing in all the elements of wealth and enduring prosperity, and now that President Tyler has checked rascally politicians who determined to ride us with a national bank and tax us to death by means of what they call a perfected tariff, we have nothing to fear. I must not forget to mention that religion flourishes here as well as everything else that is good. Though our village is but six years old, it has six places of public worship and six religious societies organized—the Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, Congregational, Dutch Reformed, Methodists and Baptists. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Lefevre added twenty members to his church here last Sunday. The Herald [N. Y.] is the most popular throughout all the region and is eagerly sought in every town and hamlet in the State. And we subscribe and pay for more newspapers in proportion to our population than the people of any other State in the Union. Ours is the only new State that has ever paid all the expenses of its mail establishment and left a surplus in the general fund. So you see



we are not only a reading but a writing people. We are also a working people, and if we go on increasing our products as we have for the last three years, the next census will show such an increase of wealth as it will be hard to beat. Michigan is the Garden of the Great West and the Grand River Valley is the garden of Michigan."

The interests of the Senator were many and varied, ranging from the progress of his salt well to Presidential politics, and without effort at continuity of narrative there are here given illuminating extracts from his correspondence which bear upon Kent County history, and which (as many of the quotations already given do) present names which later were most frequently and honorably presented in the current history of the community. In September, 1842, he wrote that the State salt well was down to a depth of 770 feet, but that difficulties in construction were being met with. In October, of the same year, he recommended the establishment of a postoffice at Caledonia, with Henry C. Foster as postmaster, and also expressed the hope that James M. Nelson would not be removed as postmaster at Grand Rapids, as the only thing that could be said against him was that he was a Whig. He also recommended Peter R. L. Peirce for enrolling clerk of the Michigan Senate, but in this letter he qualified his endorsement on account of Mr. Peirce's Whig inclinations. He also recommended Digby V. Bell, of Ada, to the President and to Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, for appointment as consul. In 1843, he wrote that he had seven, and sometimes ten, men employed in cutting and binding fagots, for use at the salt works. Another letter to George H. Lyon tells of the cost of the farming operations in Michigan and is of such value that it is quoted in full, as follows: "The average cost of cutting the grub and clearing off an acre of common oak opening here, ready for the plow, is about \$5, and four yoke of oxen with a large, strong breaking-up plow and a man to hold it, and man and boy to drive will break up on an average about an acre per day, perhaps a little more. This makes the cost of the first plowing or breaking-up about \$3 per acre and for wheat crop the breaking-up should all be done by the 10th of July. The crop, plowing and harrowing can be done with less than half the teams necessary for breaking and will not cost more than \$1.75 per acre. As fencing timber can always be found on the ground in oak openings, a fence of good oak rail will not cost more than 25 cents per rod, and for a ten-acre field in a square form \$40, or \$4 per acre, making the whole cost of clearing, fencing, plowing, and sowing oak openings with wheat about \$13.75 per acre, besides the cost of seed, which will be from 50 to 75 cents per bushel. Most people, however, do not incur the expense of taking off the timber for some three or four years, or until the limbs begin to fall. They girdle the trees and let them stand, which renders the first expense of clearing not more than \$2 per acre. The price of working oxen at this season of the year is from \$45 to \$60 per yoke. The average price of wheat within thirty miles of the lake has been about 50 cents per bushel for three years past, but it is now at least 60 cents. The average yield per acre, both in Michigan and Wisconsin, is not far from 17 bushels, sometimes as high as 30. It always commands cash price, and is the only article raised by the farmers in this country that will always sell



for money; though on account of the scarcity occasioned by the past hard winter, corn, oats and potatoes will all command money now. The average prices for the past four years have been—for corn, about 30 cents; oats, 18; and potatoes, 15 cents per bushel. Wages for men to work on farms by the month, during six months of the warmest season, is about \$12 per month; in Wisconsin, about the same, perhaps a little more."

In June, his financial condition was such that he considered asking an appointment as public surveyor in Iowa, although his name was then mentioned as a candidate for Congress. In this connection he stated: "I formerly spent ten years of my life in surveying public lands. Every line was run by myself personally, and in running them I have walked in the woods more than 50,000 miles." This was about equal to a journey on foot twice around the world at the equator. At this time he reported that the State salt well was down to a depth of 876 feet, and that further work would be more expensive; and, in July, he was forced to report that the State salt well was hopelessly obstructed.

Political conditions engrossed him during the next month and his attitude was that he would be glad to accept the nomination, but did not wish to interfere with other candidates. He was nominated and returned thanks to General Fitzgerald, who withdrew his own candidacy, and at that time he stated that he did not expect to be a candidate for re-election. In this letter he referred to his own financial condition, saying: "All the property in St. Joseph which you purchased for me and I paid for with money obtained from Isaac Bronson, I reconveyed or rather conveyed to his executors, and they have, besides, my farms in Kalamazoo County, this county and at Lyons to pay the balance that I was owing them on account of investments made for Isaac Bronson. These investments and my guarantee to refund the money invested and interest, over and above all costs and taxes, ruined me. I have, to be sure, been helped down the hill a good deal by being endorser and surety for my friends, but my dealings with the Bronsons injured me more than anything else. It will require ten years of diligent attention to business and the strictest economy on my part to enable me to pay my debts. I have been hard at work since 1839 to effect this object, but make slow progress." In October, he gave his earnest approval to the effort to improve navigation on the Grand River as far as Jackson, and in a letter to Allen Goodrich, Nov. 14, he told of his election to Congress: "In this Kent County," he said, "where I thought I should do exceedingly well to get one hundred, I received two hundred majority." To his father he wrote that his majority was about 2,300, and he naively stated, "I shall avail myself of the franking privilege to write you somewhat oftener." He further said: "My salt works, which are now nearly complete and ready for operation, will be left in charge of George A. Robinson and G. S. Deane, the former keeping the books and accounts and the latter looking after the works. Lucius A. Thayer will attend school at the academy in this village during the coming winter and Lucretia will take care of his clothes, etc. Truman H. Lyon keeps the Mansion House, near the foot of Monroe street, down in the middle of the village, about 100 rods from my office, and is do-



ing and is likely to do a very good business. Sidney Smith has just been elected treasurer of this county, an office worth some \$300 per annum, and will remove here from Ada in a few weeks and occupy the house about half way between my office and Truman Lyon's, so that we shall be all together in this village."

To Samuel Etheridge, of Coldwater, he wrote: "Daniel Ball, a merchant of this place and owner of a steamboat and other boats running on Grand River, and also owner of the plaster mill on Plaster Creek, two miles below here, talks of building a flour mill here next year, and E. B. Bostwick, of this place, who was a candidate for the office of Lieutenant Governor two years ago, is now erecting a grist mill of two runs of stone on Plaster Creek, about three miles distant, and is about to erect another on Bear Creek, which falls into Grand River on its north side, about 14 miles above this place." A very human touch is given when he thanks A. Roberts & Son for the gift of a "very beautiful and excellent coat which fits to a T. and is just the article that I happened to be most in need of."

Leaving Grand Rapids, Dec. 11, 1843, he said: "Stayed that night at McNaughton's; Tuesday night reached Kalamazoo; Wednesday night at Battle Creek; Thursday at Jackson, and Friday reached Detroit, where remained until Monday." He took the stage through Canada, reaching Buffalo the 22d, leaving on the cars the next morning, expecting to reach Washington the 27th, via New York. From Washington, he wrote, Dec. 31, 1843, of the Michigan crop as follows: "Wheat—the crop, taking the whole State together, is greater than last year by at least ten per cent. Barley—about the same as last year, little raised. Oats—crop injured by cold weather in the spring and the excessive heat in the latter part of June and July, and less than last year by ten per cent. Rye—about the same as last year, little raised. Buckwheat—about the same as last year. Indian corn—better than last year by five per cent. Potatoes and hay—about the same. Sugar [maple]—almost an entire failure, at least eighty per cent. less than last year, because the snow was so deep the ground did not freeze."

An early official act was to recommend that the name of Kent postoffice be changed to Grand Rapids to "correspond with the name of the village in which it is located." "The office," he said, "was established and received its name before the village of Grand Rapids began to grow much. The village now has upwards of one thousand inhabitants, and persons abroad are often much puzzled to know how to direct their letters on account of the village bearing one name and the postoffice there another." He was modest in his expenditures, as is shown by his statement in a letter to Edward Lyon, Feb. 2, 1844, "I pay \$9 a week for board, lodging, room, fire and light, and 25 cents a week for bootblackening. When I was here four years ago the same board, etc., would have cost at least \$12 or \$14 a week. The price has fallen about 25 per cent. and is now 25 per cent. too high, as everything but flour is as low here as in Detroit."

Another letter of value is one to E. J. Foote, of the same date, in which he tells of lands near Grand Rapids, saying: "Good lands can be purchased within 3 or 4 miles of Grand Rapids for from \$2.50 to \$6 per acre, according to situation. Within two miles of Grand



Rapids I know very little land that can be bought as low as \$6 per acre, but within ten miles there is plenty to be had for \$1.25. Farms that have been improved bring more, according to the value of the improvements, but no improved farm would sell for more than \$10 or \$11 per acre, unless it lay near the village, so as to be valuable for other purposes than farming."

To W. H. Sherwood he wrote: "As you have joined H. R. Williams in the purchase of the plaster mills of D. Ball, I hope you will go to Grand Rapids to reside. I should be much gratified to have you there for a neighbor. I should think the purchase at \$8,000 a very good one, though as there is no snow there this winter you will not be able to sell much plaster until spring." In another letter to Hiram Moore, relative to patents on harvesting machines, he mentioned the fact that Cyrus McCormick, of Rock Ridge County, Virginia, took out a patent for cutting grain by a machine with a sickle-edge saw, June 21, 1834. This was the first patent for the great McCormick harvester still in use upon thousands of farms. Among his communications were ones inclosing a petition from Kent County, asking that mail be sent from Battle Creek to Milwaukee by way of the mouth of the Grand River and steamboat, thus cutting the time 24 hours, and another asking that a postoffice be established in the town of Walker, with James Davis as postmaster. He acknowledged the receipt of a letter from E. B. Bostwick for the establishment of a postoffice to be called Cannonsburg. To Bishop Lefevre, of Detroit, he wrote as to the settlement of the mission lands, that they were to be sold as soon as the value of the improvements made by both missionary societies should be ascertained, and that Robert Stewart, of Detroit, had been instructed to appoint an agent on the part of the United States to appraise the improvements, acting with the persons selected by the missionary societies. He was active in the attempt to secure appropriations for government improvements at the mouth of the Grand and the Kalamazoo Rivers, but Congress refused to appropriate for new projects. In April, 1844, he sent power of attorney to George A. Robinson, authorizing him to do what might seem best as to building a bridge across Grand River, favoring the Bridge street site. In relation to this bridge he wrote to G. S. Deane, also, as follows: "Mr. Richmond wants a bridge built over the canal at the foot of Bridge street. I have written to him that I will authorize Mr. Robinson, and I do now authorize him, or you, to make the best arrangement you can for paying my portion of the expense of building such bridge, according to the proportion which the water power which I use from the canal bears to the whole amount used by others. This is as much as I ought to be required to do. I hope you will do all you can to get the bridge finally located on Bridge street. I will give the right-of-way there, but will not give it at any other point below the basin." He also gives instructions for carrying on the work at the salt well. At this time he was deeply interested in politics, and his attitude as to renomination was that other candidates had been very kind to him and that he would not then stand in their way, but that if the convention failed to agree upon a nominee he would be glad to accept. He was also one of the chief promoters of the candidacy of Lewis Cass for President and wrote



illuminating letters to Cass relative to his attitude on the annexation of Texas and the details of the National Democratic convention at Baltimore. He was very hopeful of Cass' nomination, but was forced to write, with regret, that "Cove" Johnson had suddenly sprung the name of James K. Polk, of Tennessee, and stampeded the convention. Even during this excitement he found time to attend to local matters and urged the postoffice department that mail be carried from Grand Rapids to Grand Haven by steamboat. He also said, in a letter to Nathaniel Emery: "I am glad to hear that immigration to our country has commenced this spring in a flood like that of four years ago." He also urged Charles Butler to go to Washington to aid, with his influence, in passing a bill granting to Michigan alternate sections of public lands along the Clinton & Kalamazoo Canal, from Rochester to the Grand River. His letter congratulating James K. Polk shows his intimate acquaintance with the Presidential nominee, and his large influence is shown by his activities, one of which was to urge that the office of Surveyor-General be removed from Cincinnati to Detroit, as most of the unsurveyed lands were in Michigan, and the work could be managed from Cincinnati only at great expense. He also asked the appointment of a sub-Indian agent on the Grand River, saying: "There are several thousands of Ottawas and Chippewas scattered through that part of the State who have no means of communicating their wishes and wants to the government, short of going to the agency at Detroit, a distance of more than 200 miles."

As the Congressional convention approached, in August, 1844, he wrote Gen. J. Burdick: "The delegates from Kent County are Thomas B. Church and S. G. Harris. From Ottawa the delegates originally appointed could not attend and they have substituted F. M. Johnson and George M. Mills, of this place; but I believe Ottawa County is entitled to only one delegate, so Johnson and Mills will have to settle the matter between themselves as to who shall act. I will not go into a scramble for a nomination and have requested them not to bring me out or vote for me unless first perfectly sure that a majority of delegates or other portions of the district will support me. He was not nominated, and in a letter to Gen. Thomas Fitzgerald he said: "I have no regrets on this account, but I do regret that I was brought forward and voted for against my expressed request. I have learned that the first thing George Mills did after his arrival at Kalamazoo, before the convention, was to meet J. S. Chipman and Gen. Burdick and there lay a plan to have me brought forward as a candidate on the first ballot for the double purpose of injuring me before the convention and also with reference to any other occasion that I might be a candidate hereafter. This arrangement was entered into without the knowledge of the other delegates from Kent and Ottawa Counties and Mills had address enough to induce them to fall in with his views, though they did not know his motives and supposed him friendly to me."

In October, 1844, in a communication to the commissioner of patents, he reported the condition of Michigan crops as being an average yield, and that at least ten times as much sugar was made from the maple trees last Spring as was made the Spring previous. "One young man, Mr. Coon, of Kent County, made seven hundred pounds from one hundred trees."



At this time is opened another unfortunate episode in Mr. Lyon's career when he writes to Henry R. Schoolcraft, the well-known Indian scholar, saying that judgment for nearly ten thousand dollars had been rendered against him and O. Newberry as sureties on Schoolcraft's bond and begging the latter to make provision to save him from paying his share of the verdict. He closes: "If you do not, I must of course be utterly ruined beyond all hope of recovery."

At the close of this year, a great temptation was presented Mr. Lyon, as General Cass had resigned from the Senate when a candidate for the Presidential nomination and his successor was to be chosen by the next Legislature. There was a question among the friends of General Cass as to whether he should be a candidate for the Senate, accept a cabinet appointment if proffered, or remain in private life as best furthering his chances for the Presidency in 1848. Mr. Lyon urged that Cass be a candidate for the Senate, and after he had done this his own friends strongly urged that Mr. Lyon be a candidate. W. A. Richmond, of Grand Rapids, one of Mr. Lyon's closest friends, urged that he be a candidate, even in opposition to General Cass. In reply to this Mr. Lyon said: "The prize is almost too tempting to be rejected, and if I could secure it without being placed in opposition to General Cass and his wishes and interest, I should of course be glad to do so; but as I understand his views and wishes, I do not see how this can be done. I expressed to the General when I last saw him in Detroit a wish that he might be elected to the Senate. I can do nothing that shall be inconsistent with these professions, not even to secure a seat for six years in the Senate of the United States." Cass was re-elected and Mr. Lyon expressed his pleasure that his name had not been brought forward.

His last days in Washington were spent in an effort to be useful to his friends and in this he was successful to a marked degree. "Cove" Johnson was the new Postmaster General and to him he recommended the appointment of Truman H. Lyon as postmaster of Grand Rapids, in place of Mr. Nelson, saying that Mr. Nelson had himself signed a petition in favor of T. H. Lyon. He also recommended W. A. Richmond as superintendent of Indian affairs for Michigan and S. M. Johnson [Simeon] for a consular appointment. In the meantime, through General Cass, he urged his own appointment as Surveyor-General, and in a letter to Cass, dated March 31, 1845, he said: "I have not yet received my appointment, but for an accidental allusion to it the other evening when conversing with the President I should have lost it, and a man from Ohio would have been appointed. The President had forgotten that he made you any promise in my behalf." He also recommended John Almy as agent at New York to direct immigration to Michigan, and said that Judge Almy had devoted six months in Boston and New York to turning the tide of immigration to Michigan. Before leaving the Capitol his efforts were crowned with success. Mr. Richmond was appointed Indian agent for Michigan and S. M. Johnson consul at Matanzas, Cuba, at a salary of about \$1,600, and Lyon was appointed Surveyor-General. Writing to General Cass, June 3, 1845, he said: "S. M. Johnson has heard of his appointment, and if there is any happier man alive than he is this day I should be glad to see him. He attributes his success en-

tirely to your letter, as he ought, and his feelings are all right." It was at this time that he gave permission to James Scribner to procure for the purpose of constructing a bridge across the rapids of Grand River "any stone belonging to me on said rapids, excepting such as have been laid into the wing wall at the head of the canal or into the wall built by Daniel Ball."

In reference to Michigan prospects he said, July, 1845: "We have fine crops of all kinds in this part of Michigan now on the ground and the prospects warrant the belief that the wheat crop here will be better and more abundant than ever before. Everything here at Grand Rapids looks prosperous and the whole Grand River Valley is increasing in wealth and population, and also in political importance." One of his first acts as Surveyor-General was to offer his friend, John Almy, a position as clerk, at \$1,000 per annum, and soon after taking office he went, with the State geologist, Dr. Houghton, and others, for a trip of exploration to investigate the copper region of Lake Superior. Returning from this journey, in October, 1845, he wrote to S. M. Johnson that they had personally examined three locations and found them to cover one of the most extensive and valuable deposits of micaceous or specular iron ore that had ever been found in the world. He said that he doubted if such a deposit could be found elsewhere, either in Europe or America, for richness and abundance, and the facilities with which it might be quarried and worked.

The "published letters" of the Senator end at this point, but he continued as Surveyor-General, aiding greatly in the development of the State, and maintaining a constant interest in the welfare of Grand Rapids. The salt works were finally abandoned, and Mr. Lyon was never able to realize the fortune which had always been just beyond his grasp. But, undoubtedly, that effort and the talk it occasioned had a persisting influence which resulted later in the wondrous salt production of Michigan, now much larger than that of all the other States of the country combined! His beautiful philosophy of life and death enabled him to withstand all the arrows of fortune with magnanimity and death, in 1851, did not find him a soured or disappointed man.



## CHAPTER VII.

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

EXODUS OF THE INDIANS—ORGANIZATION OF THE VILLAGE OF GRAND RAPIDS—FIRST COURTHOUSE—THE LYCEUM—BEGINNING OF THE LUMBER INDUSTRY—PROMINENT ARRIVALS—MURDER OF AN INDIAN CHIEF—FIRST GERMAN SETTLERS—THE HOLLAND COLONY—INCORPORATION AS A CITY—DISASTROUS FLOODS—PLANK ROADS AND RAILROAD PROJECTS—DISASTROUS FIRES—AGRICULTURAL FAIR.

Before the close of 1837 the Indians had quite generally left the immediate vicinity of Grand Rapids, some following the Rev. Slater, others going to Pentwater and others to the new territory opened to them in the West. This probably gave rise to the often repeated mistake that the settlers found here a "deserted Indian village." The village was deserted, however, by 1838, as during that year General Harrison completed the treaty with the Indians by which the great majority of them moved West. While the Indians did not live here, many came to trade, and the Hon. Frank Little, of Kalamazoo, speaking of the village in 1838, says that "it swarmed with Indians who were spearing sturgeon in the river."

Among the events of chief importance during 1838 was the organization of the village of Grand Rapids, which was incorporated by act of the Legislature on April 5, 1838. The boundary of the incorporation began with Fulton street and the river; thence east to the southeast corner of Hatch's addition (later the Kendall addition); north to the line of Hastings street; west to the west line of the old Canal street; south along that street to the river, which at that time was at the foot of Pearl street, and thence down the river bank. By this act a full set of village officers was provided for, with a board of trustees as the chief governing power. An election was held at the little court house on Monday, May 1, 1838, and the trustees elected were Louis Campau, Richard Godfroy, William A. Richmond, Charles I. Walker, G. R. Coggeshall, James Watson, and Henry C. Smith, who was chosen by the trustees as their President. Louis Campau received the highest vote, which was 141. Other officers were John W. Peirce, clerk; Charles I. Walker, treasurer; and Gideon Suprenant, marshal. The board of trustees organized at the office of Charles I. Walker, on May 14, and a week later the by-laws of the village were adopted. In these first ordinances much attention was paid to the morals of the village, and the keeping of game houses or ball alleys was stopped and the discharge of firearms was prohibited within the village. It was also provided, although this was not enforced, that licensed tavern keepers only should sell liquors. Steps were taken to drain the swamp which existed in the neighborhood bounded by Fountain and Ionia, Lyon and Division streets. The first public well was authorized, when citizens were permitted to place one at the corner of Monroe and Ionia streets. It was also proposed to open Bond

street to Monroe and, in July, the trustees purchased a tract of six acres from James Ballard for \$300, for cemetery purposes. This was the beginning of the Fulton Street cemetery and one-third of it was reserved to the use of the Catholics of the community, and the whole was to be maintained at the expense of the village. But few taxes were paid, or payable, as the machinery for taxation had not long existed, but to relieve its embarrassment, the trustees issued village script to the amount of \$300, in one and two-dollar denominations. Specimens of this script are preserved at the Public Library. It was receivable for taxes and corporation dues of all kinds and much of it was in circulation, at a discount, for a number of years.

The first court house was erected in 1838. This was a two-story frame structure, about 30x40 feet in size, located on the site selected by the commissioners, in 1833, at Fulton Street Park. It was beautified by a cupola which was surmounted by a gilded ball. A hallway ran through the center of the building and in it were located not only the county offices, but the county jail and the residence of the sheriff. The cost of this building, completed, was in the neighborhood of \$5,000. The contract price, awarded Wm. I. Blakely and S. Granger, the builders, being \$3,000. This was by far the finest court house in Western Michigan and was justly the pride of the community, although it involved the county in what was for that period a staggering indebtedness. It was one of the centers of the civic life of the community until destroyed by fire, in 1844, leaving the debt as an unpleasant reminder. The great event of the early spring was the unprecedented flood, which caused serious damage and interruption to business, but served to show the people the great necessity for flood protection, which has since been carried almost to perfection. Several descriptions of this flood have been preserved. Mrs. Withey wrote of it as follows: "In February, 1838, great anxiety was felt on account of the ice in the river. One evening, just in the midst of a spirited debate in the Lyceum, came a cry of alarm. Every one started to the scene of trouble. It was an anxious night, followed by an exciting day. At mid-day, the ice in a vast body began to move and piled up in a solid mass, twenty to thirty feet high, forcing the water suddenly back on the little town, so that many barely escaped with their lives. The Almy and Page families were taken to our house, very much excited after their narrow escape." The whole scene, accompanied as it was with a heavy rumbling sound and the rushing of the water, is spoken of by witnesses as grand and awe-inspiring beyond description. Frank Little wrote of crossing the river in a canoe, "although the mountains of ice made it very difficult to gain access to the channel, the Stevens T. Mason, a steamboat that had been running on the river the previous summer, was jammed from its moorings by the ice and flood and driven inland up the valley of a small creek to a point well towards Dr. Platt's early residence, corner of Fulton and Division streets. The waters subsiding left the boat stranded high and dry, a long distance from the river. Captain Short and his son-in-law, Jennings, in the spring of 1838 spent a number of weeks getting the boat back again, a work that I viewed with much boyish interest and curiosity." Cooler weather followed and checked the flood, but the roads and streets were practically impassable during all the Spring months.



Perhaps the most characteristic development of village life was the early establishment of the Lyceum, in the fall of 1837. Many of the pioneers were men of good education, with the American fondness for politics and the American love of freedom of speech. With but little reading matter and no entertainment or amusements from the outside, these men were forced upon their own resources, and the Lyceum was the result. Here it was that the young lawyers, doctors, preachers, and business men sharpened their wits in lengthy debates upon the most profound questions of politics and religion. Nearly all of the men later prominent in the community took part in these meetings, and though the institution languished at times, it was for many years one of the most vital factors in Grand Rapids' life and served many an ambitious youth in lieu of a college course. John W. Peirce was the early secretary of the Lyceum, which held its meetings in the schoolhouse on Prospect Hill.

The signs of improvement in civic life were numerous. With the coming of Rev. James Ballard there was an attempt to arouse an interest in temperance work. He was active in urging the villagers to "sign the pledge," but this early seed seems to have been on barren ground. At this time practically all merchants sold liquors by the barrel or by the drink, and it was quite customary for the merchant to have a cask of whiskey "on tap," and his customers could help themselves by the tumblerful; at this time whiskey sold at from twenty-one to twenty-five cents per gallon.

The real beginning of the great lumbering industry was made during the year, when James M. and George C. Nelson and Wm. H. Withey began operations, and it is claimed that James M. Nelson had the honor of sending the first lumber raft down the river in that year. There were many additions to different lines of industry during 1838. John Westcott was a new blacksmith, and Wilder D. Foster began his career in Grand Rapids by working as a tinner for E. J. Squier, with whom he later entered into partnership. Mrs. Cramond opened the first millinery store, and William Rust appeared as the first baker. He was located on Monroe, opposite Market, and the first bake-oven was built by a Mr. Haskin. It was in this year, also, that Abel Page started a more pretentious nursery on Michigan street, occupying two or three acres above Ionia. He was the first to grow tomatoes, which were then called "love apples" and thought by some to be poisonous. Work on the canal progressed slowly, but river navigation was increased by the building of the steamer 'Patronage.' The hull was built at Grand Rapids and the engine was made at Grandville. Orson Peck also built a small steamer, called the "John Almy," for up-river navigation, but this boat made but a few trips before it was stranded at the mouth of Flat River. Speaking of the village roads of this period, Baxter's History says: "There were wagon roads winding in various directions, unfenced and unworked save by the wear of travel. The most feasible passage from the head of Monroe street to the Bridge street bridge, when that was built, was by a wagon track passing the National Hotel corner, skirting along the eastern slope of Prospect Hill, a little west of Ionia street, crossing in a muddy gully the little creek which formerly ran around the north end of that hill, and picking the way carefully over dry spots and



past bogs near Kent to Bridge street, thence through a miry slough to the bridge. A similar wagon track ran in a zig-zag course near the foot of the hill from Coldbrook to Bridge street. The road toward Plainfield sought the dry places, but did not escape all the muddy ones. Nowhere within the village limits was there a good east-and-west wagon road. From Fulton street east of the public square was one that climbed the hill in a northeasterly direction through a ravine which reached the summit a little east of where the Central School building now stands, and thence wound its way among the oak grubs back to the Thornapple road. On the west side were less of ups and downs, but here was plenty of variety in the alternating patches of stony and gravelly and miry grounds, and for nearly twenty years the teamster chose his route (inside of what is now the town) over unfenced lands, through bushes and past the bad places, by what appeared to be the most feasible way. This condition of things has long since passed, and it is only by the eye of the mind that one can see and comprehend the great change that has taken place from the ragged, original roads to the handsomely graded streets."

Canton Smith was the keeper of the Eagle Hotel and C. H. Carrol of the Grand River Exchange, while Myron Hinsdill held forth at Hinsdill Hotel, and the Misses Bayless, sisters of Mrs. George Coggeshall, kept a boarding house in the fine residence which Louis Campau had been forced to give up. The business centers were on Market street, near the Eagle Hotel, and at the corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets.

Among the arrivals who later became of prominence were Robert I. Shoemaker, a carpenter and joiner and well known as the official bell-ringer and sexton, later becoming superintendent of the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company. Ebenezer W. Barns, the first county clerk, and county treasurer in 1850, came from Vermont as a young man of nineteen. He became prominent in the carrying trade on the river and was at one time the postmaster at Grand Haven. Geo. W. Griggs, who married Miss Marsac, was active in the community until leaving for St. Louis. He returned to Grand Rapids, in 1862, as a successful farmer, and was prominent in the State Agricultural Society, and was one of the organizers of Michigan Agricultural College. Joseph B. Baxter came as a carpenter and millwright, and was one of the pioneer wagonmakers. Later, he was in the livery and grocery business, and became known as a manufacturer of bed springs. He erected a home on Fountain and North Division streets in 1843. Wilder D. Foster began his Grand Rapids career humbly as a tinner and extended his business to hardware lines. He was elected mayor and served in the Legislature, being one of the early Republicans of Michigan, and was member of Congress from this district at the time of his death. John Mathison was a young man and one of the first tailors, later being a prominent clothing merchant. James McCray settled at Grandville, where he was an important figure until 1843, when he moved to Grand Rapids. He was an iron founder and machinist and his sudden death, in 1851, was one of the sensations of that year. Orson Cook also was a builder, constructing the Bronson House on old Canal street and built the first schoolhouse in Gaines township. He was one of the Democratic leaders and was a well-known justice



of the peace. Robert W. Morris was here but a short time, being interested in the saw-mill with W. I. Blakely and Leonard Covell, grandfather of Gen. Covell, serving in the American army in France. He removed to Muskegon, in 1838, and became a partner of Martin Ryerson, attaining large wealth. In 1865, he returned to Grand Rapids to enjoy his possessions, but died within a year.

The arrival who had the most to do with Grand Rapids' history in the years immediately following, was Rev. James Ballard. He was a man of strong personality and became dearly beloved in spite of his strenuous advocacy of a code of morals somewhat rigid for pioneer days. He was a native of Massachusetts and a graduate of Williams College. He came here with his wife and occupied a farm in Paris township, but his services were soon in demand as a preacher and teacher, and he made Grand Rapids his home. He probably officiated at more pioneer weddings and funerals than any other man. He was the pastor of the Congregational Church, a teacher, a temperance lecturer and a leader of the Liberty party in the days when it was most popular. To no other one man was it given to do so much for the moral uplift of the community.

The most sensational event of the year 1839 was the murder of the Indian chief, Kawiquashcum, or Long Nose. He had signed the treaty of Chicago, in 1821, and never regained his popularity with the tribe on that account. His life had been threatened many times. After the Indian payment, he went with others to Coldbrook for a drunken spree and, consuming all the whiskey they had with them, some of the Indians returned to Grand Rapids for more, leaving Chief Long Nose and two children at Coldbrook. One of these Indian children was a boy, who related the story of the murder to Lucas Robinson as follows: "I sat in the stern of the canoe, tied to the bank of Grand River near the mouth of Coldbrook. I had a knife in my hand paring a turnip. The two old men, Wasogenaw and Kawiquashcum, sat on the bank by the fire. I heard Wasogenaw say, 'You old fool, did you not know better than to sell this whole territory and impoverish your nation? I am going to take your life.' Kawiquashcum, pulling out and flashing his knife, said: 'You can't do that. Do you see this?' The other man bent down to me and said: 'Do you see that man? He is what has impoverished you. Let me take that knife you have got. I am going to kill him. Then I want you to help me put him in this canoe and we will take him to the middle of the river and throw him in.' I dropped my knife into the river and said, 'I have no knife.' The old man said, 'I thought I saw you peeling a turnip with the knife.' Showing him a sliver of wood, I said, 'No, I had only this.' The old man became very furious and raging about went to the bank of the river and pulled out a maple club about two feet long, with a knot on the end. He brandished it around frantically, capering awhile and saying to me, 'This is the way when you kill something.' Then rushing up to Kawiquashcum and saying with frantic gestures, 'This is the way when you kill something,' struck him on the head. The old man threw up his hands and feet, dropped his knife and begged. The other kept on striking and repeating the same expression. I jumped out of the canoe and ran toward the village. Wasogenaw called to me to stop. I ran faster, he following. Jumping across Coldbrook I got



into the mud and fell down. Looking back, the old man was over me with a club. I evaded him, ran and met the party returning from Grand Rapids with the whiskey. I said to them, 'The old men are killing each other.' The son of Wasogenaw said to me, 'I will go and pacify him' [his father]. He walked up to his father and patting him on the cheek said, 'You fool, can't you be satisfied with committing one murder without taking the life of the boy?' The old man then fell on the ground and cried. All the men then went to the camp and found Kawiquashcum dead. They put him in the canoe and carried him to Plainfield." This chief was buried at Plainfield, not far from the bridge and near the burial place of Wabesis, who was another victim of Indian vengeance.

A few of the first German settlers were added to the community in 1840, being the first foreign element, except the French traders and the Irish canal workers. The first distinctively German settlement in West Michigan was at Westphalia, in Clinton County, in 1836, but, by 1840, Anthony Cordes and family, with others, settled in Grand Rapids and others followed in the winter of 1842. The first band was organized in 1840, with John W. Peirce, H. G. Stone, Henry Stone, A. Hosford Smith, H. K. Rose, Abraham Snively and Leonard Covell as members. It was called the Harmonia Band, but whether it lived up to its name is not recorded. It furnished the music for festal occasions, but was a short-lived institution.

Among the newcomers were Francis B. Gilbert, who became a successful business man in connection with his brother, Thomas D. Gilbert, but removed to Grand Haven in 1844, returning to Grand Rapids in 1855. Samuel B. Ball came this year, as clerk and book-keeper in the store of Granger & Ball, Daniel Ball being his uncle. He built a business block in 1844, in which was located what was called Irving Hall, and he was one of the founders of the first lodge of Odd Fellows. He died in 1850. Daniel Ball was a newcomer and was a man of some capital and great enterprise. He was a merchant, active in transportation, and was the pioneer of the present banking system. Another man who proved himself a great addition to the town was P. R. L. Peirce. His first residence in Grand Rapids was brief, as he removed to Cincinnati, in 1843, returning to Grand Rapids in 1850. He studied law with George Martin, was prominent in the Lyceum and in temperance work and was in the book business. Later, as county clerk, he was considered the model county officer of the state, and he was afterwards a member of the Legislature, mayor and postmaster at Grand Rapids, and prominent as a lecturer, Republican politician, and an enthusiastic Episcopalian. Truman H. Lyon came to Michigan in 1836, and to Grand Rapids in 1840. He was active in business and politics, associated with Lucius Lyon in the salt wells and was a member of the Legislature in 1854. H. H. Philbrick was the pioneer music teacher. He built the square wooden cottage on Fulton street, just east of the Park, and during the earlier days no public entertainment was considered complete unless he had charge of the music. It was in this year, also, that Lucretia, the beloved sister of Lucius Lyon, came from Vermont to make a home for her brother. His letters show the strong and intimate affection which existed between him and his sister. She was with him in Washington



when he was Congressman and was one of the acknowledged belles of the Capitol. After her brother's death, in 1851, she made Grand Rapids her home, being dearly beloved and highly honored until her death, which occurred in 1895. O. W. C. Lawrence was a newcomer, from Pennsylvania. He became prominent as a Free Soiler and was a nominee of that party for Congress in 1848, withdrawing in favor of Rev. William Sprague, the Whig candidate, who in turn had him appointed as clerk of the Senate Committee on Patents, and he afterwards became a prominent attorney in Washington. Lamont A. Chubb saw Kent County for the first time in 1840, but he came as an infant, the son of Jonathan Chubb, and he later became prominent both as an educator and business man. Another infant who became prominent was Joseph C. Genia, son of Henry Genia, a French-Canadian trader noted for his great strength and courage and who was said to have come here about the same time as Louis Campau. The story is told of Henry Genia that Mr. Campau offered him a barrel of pork if he would wade Grand River going home with the barrel on his head. He did this, and asked for more, but Campau was satisfied. Again it was said that, being attacked by a bear, he broke the brute's jaw with his hands. He was noted as the best fighter and wrestler in the valley, but was withal good natured and kind. He was killed in the West while working on a contract on the Union Pacific Railroad. It is said that three men who opposed the building of the road ordered him off and in the fight which followed Genia worsted the three, single-handed. The next day they came with guns and Genia was killed. Edward Campau, son of Francis E. and Monique (Moran) Campau, came during this year to join his uncles, Louis and Antoine. With others of the Campau family, he was a direct descendant of Marquis Jacques Campau, who was identified with Cadillac in the founding of Detroit. He was employed by Canton Smith and Wm. H. Withey on the stage line between Battle Creek and Grand Rapids, and later was a prominent farmer. He died in Caledonia township Jan. 24, 1906. James and Thomas Sargeant were the sons of Thomas Sargeant and were known as river men from Grand Rapids to Grand Haven. Their appearance was so alike that few could tell them apart.

With Lucius Lyon in Congress and W. A. Richmond in the State Senate, Grand Rapids felt that it had come into its own, in 1844. There were petitions to the Legislature without end for the improvement of Grand River, for the establishment of roads and for the building of bridges. One of the first of these petitions was presented by the supervisors of Kent County, relative to the county loan. Another was for the improvement of the road to Battle Creek, which was thought very important, as the land office was at Marshall. In the Senate, a select committee was appointed, with Richmond at its head, to consider Grand River improvements, and by joint resolution a government land grant was asked for the building of a military road through the Grand River valley. The Grand River Bridge Company, which had been incorporated, asked the Legislature for an extension of time and the supervisors asked that the time for collection of taxes be extended to the first Monday in March. The Legislature passed a bill appropriating 6,000 acres for the building of a bridge at Grand Rapids and also a law providing for the construction of a



road from Grand Rapids to Battle Creek. The State salt well had proven a failure, and a law was passed empowering the Governor to appoint an agent to take charge of the machinery, etc., at the well, and George A. Robinson was appointed. The law providing for a free bridge appropriated 6,000 acres of land and authorized the supervisors to have charge of the construction and to build the bridge within two years. This precipitated a warm contest at Grand Rapids as to the location of the new bridge. Downtown people favored building the bridge at the foot of Monroe street, while the uptown people wished the bridge at Bridge street. This was the chief issue at the April election, when the county supervisors were chosen. The vote at Grand Rapids was forty more than at the preceding State election. The Monroe street voters were in the majority, and they celebrated the result with a grand jubilee. It was on this issue that John Almy was beaten by forty-three majority for supervisor, and but one Democratic candidate for constable was elected. The Board of Supervisors was four Democrats and five Whigs and it was thought that this settled the site in favor of the downtown location. Following the election, James A. Davis, as chairman of the Board of Supervisors, advertised for proposals for the bridge, with the condition that it be located at the foot of Huron street. The contract was finally let to E. H. Turner and James Scribner, and the Bridge street location was adopted. This bridge was not built until 1845, and, in the meantime, the first bridge across Grand River in Kent County was completed at Ada in 1844. The state paid the expense of this bridge, which was \$1,347.44. A bill to incorporate a Grand Rapids plank road company was also passed, as were also bills providing for appropriations for agricultural societies and for the completion of the Central Railroad at Kalamazoo. The Pontiac & Grand River road was established by law, Z. G. Winsor being one of the commissioners to locate it. It was laid out from Lyons, through Millport bridge, to Plainfield and Grand Rapids. The road to Battle Creek was through Hastings, to intersect the road from Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo. It ran through Gull Prairie to Van Vleet's Tavern, near Four Mile Creek, to meet the Grand Rapids road, near Bowne's Tavern, at Prairieville. John Fallass and Nathaniel Davenport were authorized to build a dam on the Flat River and the charter of the Grand Rapids Bridge Company was extended to Jan. 31, 1846, with the provision that it was not to prevent the building of the free bridge.

During the year 1846 several men, later of much importance, made their homes in the community. Among these was Prof. Franklin Everett, who was born in Massachusetts, in 1812, graduated from Waterville College, Maine, in 1837, teaching a school in New York and coming, together with his wife, to take charge of the newly incorporated Grand Rapids Academy. In a few years this became the "Everett Academy," under which name it was conducted until 1852. He was foremost in all good works and grew to be one of the most dearly beloved of Grand Rapids men. He was prominent in the formation of the Old Residents' Association and the Kent Scientific Institute and made Grand Rapids his home until his death in 1894. Mrs. George C. Fitch, of this city, is his only surviving daughter.

Another man of great prominence and who came to stand in high



regard with his fellow-citizens and who has left a wonderful and permanent monument in his elaborate and accurate history of the city of Grand Rapids was Albert Baxter. He came of old Colonial stock, with forbears in the army of the Revolution and the War of 1812. He was born in Vermont in 1823, receiving as excellent an education as his community afforded, taught school in Vermont and later in Wisconsin, and came to Grand Rapids as a poor, but ambitious youth. He worked in a carriage shop and studied law in the evenings, working in this way for seven years. In 1849, he was married to Alvira E., daughter of Joel Guild. He was one of the leaders in the formation of the Republican party and was a delegate to the Free Democratic state convention in 1854. The following year he became editor of the Grand Rapids "Eagle," and was connected with this publication for many years. Speaking of himself in his history, Mr. Baxter said: "As to how well or how poorly he succeeded, the files of that journal contain the only continuous testimony; and, as only two copies of it now exist, the proof is substantially buried in oblivion. Politically, Mr. Baxter is a Republican; religiously or morally he makes no profession, other than to strive to be honest and kind. Financially he has been unsuccessful; with misfortune he is familiar, and likewise has personal knowledge of the distresses of many other people. Coming crippled into life, he has never enjoyed robust health. The result of his latest work—the most exacting, onerous and vexing labor of his life (unremunerative withal)—is comprised within the lids of this book. These few waymarks along the path of his experience are sketched by himself, to make sure of their correctness, and—he waits." But recently a movement has been started by a number of the old-time editors of Grand Rapids to have a tablet or monument erected to this man who contributed so much to the upbuilding of the city, to the uplifting of its morals and to the permanence of its history.

Capt. Wright L. Coffinbury was another valuable addition to the village. He was born in Ohio in 1807, and was educated as a civil engineer. His first work in Michigan was at St. Joseph, in 1844, and he came to Grand Rapids two years later, buying the jewelry shop of Aaron Dikeman. He was the first city surveyor and, later, and until the Civil War, his services were in great demand as a surveyor throughout northern Michigan. An intense Union man, he was one of the first to answer the call of Father Abraham, and his war record, as captain of Company C of the First Michigan Engineers and Mechanics, stands as one of the best parts of Grand Rapids' war annals. He was known as a student and a scientist. In the early days he was prominent in temperance work and in the Lyceum. Later he was one of the ardent supporters of the young Republican party. He was one of the founders of the Kent Museum and was known for his honesty and kindheartedness. His sudden death on a street car in Grand Rapids, in 1889, was the cause of profound grief throughout the community. His wife, Jane Beach Coffinbury, to whom he was married in 1831, and who survived him until 1895, also made an independent impression upon the community as a woman of great literary ability.



Still another was Charles C. Rood, who was born in Vermont in 1815, came to Michigan with his parents in 1821, and arrived in Grand Rapids as a young lawyer in 1846. Within a year of his coming he was elected a justice of the peace, and he was known as a successful lawyer and business man and was one of the enterprising citizens who, in 1856, established the Grand Rapids Gas Light Company, of which he was superintendent.

Judah Gray opened a wagon shop, using the power of what was later known as Kusterer Springs. He came with a record as a fighter in the Seminole War. Martin L. Sweet, a New Yorker by birth, came with John L. Clements and purchased the Big Mill and was perhaps the most prominent miller in the valley until after the Civil War. He built Sweet's Hotel in 1868, and was one of the early and successful bankers and largely interested in the lumbering business. He was one of the first directors of the Old National Bank and became one of Grand Rapids' wealthiest citizens. George Kendall came as a merchant, after having lived ten years in other parts of Michigan. He platted Kendall's addition, became prominent in municipal affairs and was a banker and man of great enterprise. He was one of the first directors of the City National Bank and one of the organizers of the Gas Light Company.

The great event of the year 1847 for the Grand River Valley was the coming of the Holland colony, the Dutch settlers. They did not at first settle at Grand Rapids, but this was the main trading point and the largest village, and as they came to trade many remained to live, and the large Dutch population of Grand Rapids came about through attrition, rather than through settlement en masse.

The great local issue was the building of the canal. No sooner had the Legislature convened than petitions were presented by citizens of Kent and Ionia Counties asking that an appropriation be made for the improvement of Grand River, and, as a part of the effort to obtain the appropriation, members from this region united with those who favored the removal of the capital from Detroit to Lansing. The bill granting 25,000 acres for the construction of a canal finally passed both houses, but the Governor hesitated to sign it. This caused much anxiety and the "Enquirer" frantically urged its approval, saying that the canal would afford uninterrupted passage of the rapids to Ionia and would add greatly to the value of crops. The Governor finally signed the bill, the provisions of which were for the construction of a canal with sufficient locks for the passage of boats and other water craft around the rapids of Grand River, for which purpose 25,000 acres of internal improvement lands were appropriated. The supervisors of Kent County were to select the lands and withhold them from sale. The canal was to be 45 feet on the water line and 4 feet deep, at all seasons, with locks 135 feet in length and 30 feet wide in the clear, to receive boats 20 feet wide, 30 feet long and 30 inches in draft, in slack water below the foot of the rapids and pass them to slack water above at all stages. The supervisors were empowered to build a dam, or wing dam, but with suitable provisions for the passage of boats. After completion, and the right-of-way being secured to the state, the judges of Kent and Ionia Counties, or a majority of them, were to certify to the commis-



sion to issue land certificates to the extent of the actual cost, at the rate of \$1.25 per acre. The canal was to be finished in three years. The supervisors were also empowered to charge tolls in order to keep up repairs and the canal was placed in their charge. They were empowered to advertise for bids conditioned on completion in three years and provided, further, that grants of the right-of-way and a release of all damages against the State of Michigan should be executed by the owners of the land through which the canal passed, so that the right-of-way should be secured to the State free from all incumbrance, leaving to the owner of the land on either side of the canal the use of the water for hydraulic purposes, so as not to interfere with navigation. Lands were to be selected within the Ionia land district. This act was approved Feb. 20, 1847. While the passage of this law was the occasion of much rejoicing in Grand Rapids, it was also the occasion of much discussion, and the columns of the papers were filled with long letters of advice.

William T. Powers came to Grand Rapids in June, 1847, and opened a small shop on the corner of Fountain and Ionia streets, as a cabinetmaker. His business increased in importance and, by 1852, he had established something of an export furniture trade. He then became connected with the lumber trade, was interested in the construction of the west side water-power canal and was noted as a builder, the best known of the structures built by him being the Powers Opera House. He held a number of city offices and was one of Grand Rapids' foremost and most enterprising citizens. With him, as a boy, came his son, William H. Powers, who became one of the leaders of Grand Rapids' business world in manufacturing and lumbering, and who was honored by election to the Legislature of the State. The large part which this father and son played in the history of Grand Rapids will be told as the story of the city unfolds in these pages.

Among other arrivals were John McConnell, who was known for the next twenty years as a merchant and dealer in hardware. He served as supervisor, was prominent as a mason and was a leader in the Episcopal Church. He was also one of the first directors of the Grand Rapids & Holland Railway Company. John Kendall came to join his brother George in a store which they conducted at Campau Square, and his career as a business man was highly successful. He also was a strong supporter of the Episcopalian Church and took interest, as an alderman, in the city affairs.

Another newcomer was James H. Brown, familiarly called "Jockey Brown." He was known as a shrewd trader and was able to amass a considerable estate. Another arrival was Miss Mary J. Webster, who came upon the invitation of John Ball to teach and remained to marry him. This wedding occurred in 1849, and Mrs. Ball proved a splendid helpmeet to her husband and an active aid to him in his notable career.

The year 1849 was the last year that Grand Rapids was to be known as a village, and it was a year full of important happenings. The people were wide awake and this led to many demands upon the Legislature for action relative to Kent County. It was found that the commissioners who first located the court house square, finding no provision for payment, did not report their proceedings, and it was



held that the county seat had never been officially located. This opened up the question and Plainfield, Ada, and Cannonsburg became applicants for the county seat. Commissioners were appointed by act of the Legislature, and they met and formally ratified acts of the former commission. It was felt that some action must be taken, as the county was in need of a central seat of government, the county offices being scattered throughout the village. The supervisors also petitioned the Legislature to restore the system by which each town should care for its own paupers. The most vexed question was that concerning the canal, the contractors wishing better provisions for payment as the work progressed.

In March, 1849, there was the greatest flood the village had known for a number of years. The stage from Battle Creek was compelled to take the Cascade road, as the Thornapple bridge was partly submerged. Machinery on the mill race was stopped and but a small tip of Island No. 1 could be seen, while Island No. 2 was completely under water. Wharves along the river were several feet under water and the cellars in the lower part of town were flooded. The "Enquirer" said that the flood extended as far back as the Grandville road, cutting off communication with the inhabitants of "Dublin" and "Frenchtown," except by boat. This high water delayed canal construction until the middle of July, when work was begun along the foot of Monroe street, and water was shut off from the branch of the river east of the islands. Scores of laborers were busy excavating that portion of the river bed which was to be used as a part of the canal, and what was known as the old Campau blockhouse was removed. The dam was soon commenced, being based on solid rock with frame work of heavy timbers with stone between. The upper side had a slope of thirty degrees, and was about five feet high. The dam was completed in October, and all that remained was to finish the lock-pit and the lock. The work continued until the latter part of November, when the weather became too severe.

Senator Robinson introduced a bill, which became a law, vacating a portion of the plat of Grand Rapids. This excluded what was known as the Campau and Morrison forties, being all east of the Bostwick addition and south of Fulton street, and east of the Dexter fraction.

Appropriations had been made, in 1848, for the construction of a road to the Holland Colony, with Mr. Littlejohn as commissioner. This was amended to provide for three commissioners and, thereafter, the work was pushed. In this connection the "Enquirer" said: "The trade of the colony is worth something to this village, but will never come here through impassable woods and unfordable rivers." There were petitions before the Legislature for a road from Allegan to Grand Rapids, for improvement of the Rouge River, for a dam across the Flat River and that sessions of the supreme court might be held at Grand Rapids. Governor Ransom vetoed bills for the improvement of the Kalamazoo and Flat Rivers, but an important measure that passed was for the incorporation of the Kalamazoo & Grand Rapids plank road. Another project which received much consideration was for a plank road from Galesburg to Grand Rapids. W. A. Richmond was one of the commissioners of the proposed Ottawa &



Grand Rapids railroad, for which stock subscriptions were secured and the commissioner of the Galesburg plank road also visited Grand Rapids for three days to secure subscriptions. A plank road meeting, held in August, was well attended at the schoolhouse in Gaines township, and Messrs. Taylor, Gray and Tanner were appointed as a committee to solicit subscriptions and to report on the location. There was much discussion of the best routes and the newspapers were filled with communications. At Battle Creek, \$20,000 in stock was subscribed and the commissioners of Kalamazoo were active, although that line met with some opposition locally. Governor Ransom headed a committee from Kalamazoo, which met with the people of Grand Rapids at Irving Hall, in September, and on motion of Daniel Ball a committee, consisting of George Kendall, David Burnett, Joshua Boyer, Amos Rathbone, and Daniel Ball was appointed to receive stock subscriptions. Charles Rathbun was made the director of the Galesburg plank road and work on this line proceeded so far that, in October, the first assessment of 10 per cent. was called. There was a meeting in Kalamazoo late in October, at which time Charles H. Taylor and George Kendall were made commissioners from Grand Rapids and Timothy I. Tanner from Paris, and soon the engineer, Mr. Traver, was able to report on the preliminary survey. The "Enquirer" said, in December, however, that, although there had been much talk of plank roads, but little had been accomplished.

The year 1850 is one of the milestones in Grand Rapids' history, for the village then became a city with a new charter and an entirely different system of city government. This was not accomplished without an effort, or with unanimous consent. By some it was regarded as a political move by the Whigs, and there were the usual conservatives who preferred the old ways to any innovations. Early in January, after much agitation, a public meeting was held at which Charles H. Taylor, Julius C. Abel, George Martin, E. E. Sargeant and Alfred D. Rathbone were appointed as a committee to draft a charter, to include sections 19 and 30, town 7, range 11, and sections 24 and 25, of town 7, range 12. This committee reported to an adjourned meeting, held in February, at the Public Hall, with James Scribner as chairman and Wm. H. McConnell as secretary. The committee had previously reported a charter, but the conservative element had ordered it recommitted, with instructions to amend, by adapting its provisions to those of a village incorporation. The committee reported that it could not carry out these instructions without fundamental changes which were deemed inadvisable, and, on motion, the charter as first drawn was adopted and Harvey P. Yale was appointed to proceed to Lansing with the charter and secure the necessary legislation. This meeting was largely attended and there was much warm debate. The situation was complicated by the introduction of a bill by Philo Beers for the removal of the county seat, which was very naturally opposed by Grand Rapids people. The charter was, however, approved by the Legislature on April 2, 1850, with the limits as proposed.

In December, 1849, the home of Mrs. Luce was destroyed by fire. The first week in January of the new year fire destroyed the dry kiln of David Caswell, the pail maker, and threatened the destruction of



the new bridge. Just a few days later occurred the greatest fire tragedy Grand Rapids had known, when two women lost their lives in the burning of the Catholic Parochial House. The account of this fire as given by the "Enquirer" is as follows: "Monday about 3 o'clock the building situated upon Monroe street, once occupied by Rev. Godwin as a dwelling, and recently by the Catholic Church, in part as a chapel and in part as the residence of the priests here, was consumed by fire. The flames made rapid progress, destroying the entire contents of the house, and involving in their deadly embrace Mrs. Kilroy, an aged lady, and her daughter, Miss Catherine Kilroy. That these females were in the building was not known to the multitude assembled, until the fire had nearly exhausted itself. Yet it is almost certain that they must have perished before any assistance arrived upon the spot that could have been effectual. The house was not very valuable, the chief loss being the furniture of the chapel, the books and papers of the priests, and in other personal property. The cause of the fire is not known, and there was no insurance. At the fire, it became necessary to form two lines of men from the engine to the river, a distance of about forty rods. Numbers were standing about gazing stupidly upon the flames, who could not be persuaded to contribute so much bodily labor towards the extinction of the fire, even after it was proclaimed that two females had perished, and that their bodies might, by great exertion, be saved from entire destruction. At this time, several ladies, who had previously been spectators, volunteered their services and, notwithstanding the exposure to wet and the stinging cold of the night, maintained their places in the ranks for a long time, thus reproaching in something louder than words the abominable laziness of the men. We saw ladies of delicate health thus engaged. We hope that on another occasion like that of Sunday night, there will be no necessity for the women to work that men may have the privilege of 'seeing the fire.'"

Early in February, 1851, Grand Rapids people were urged to build a plank road to Ada to hold the trade of Ionia County, and ultimately to connect with the Battle Creek & Hastings plank road. A bill by Philo Beers, changing the State road in Montcalm and Kent Counties, was passed by the Legislature, and bills were introduced for plank roads from Grand Rapids to Plainfield, and also in Walker and Vergennes townships. The Kalamazoo & Grand Rapids Plank Road Company was incorporated in March, and a short time later Rix Robinson opened subscription books for the stock of the Saginaw & Grand River Canal Company. In September, stock was offered in the Battle Creek & Grand Rapids Plank Road Company, but it was stated in October that nothing had been accomplished by this company, and a plank road to Ada was again urged. Still another move was for a plank road to Holland, and it was said: "A foundation has been laid for a large and prosperous settlement in Holland. The immigration expected will be possessed of greater means, and a heavy population will fill the region. Shall Kalamazoo, Otsego and Allegan get the trade? The government will soon make appropriations for the Black River harbor, and the Dutch will make it go far." The "Enquirer" urged that the Dutch would prefer a plank road to a railroad, on account of the expense, as they could drive their oxen and carry their own supplies, without a high charge for railroad fares.



Kent County interests, in 1851, centered about the completion of the canal, the organization of the Kalamazoo plank road, the location of the court house, and the untangling of city affairs, and with these came the delights of politics and the ordinary development of community affairs. Nothing had been done on the canal for a number of months, and up-river people stormed; and another break in the banks, early in January, made some action urgent. There was a flood in February, which the "oldest inhabitant" said had been equaled but once. There was considerable loss to the lumbering interests and much fear for the canal banks, the water rising within four inches of the top. Volunteer workmen, by the use of slabs and boards, managed to save the embankments, but there was enough water in old Canal street, opposite the postoffice, to float logs. The worst break, however, was not with the canal banks, but with the canal contractor, James Davis, who had become bankrupt and was unable to complete his contract. In March his sureties, S. O. Kingsbury, J. M. Fox, William Haldane, John Ball, W. D. Foster, Amos Roberts and Z. G. Winsor, petitioned the Legislature for relief, reciting that the original contract expired Dec. 1, 1849; that the time had been extended by the Legislature to Feb. 20, 1851, whereupon Davis entered into a new contract and the above had signed his bonds for \$20,000. Davis later abandoned the work and publicly declared his inability to proceed. The contract never was pushed to completion, the State did not exact from the bonds, and it became, to the regret of Grand Rapids people, an abandoned and closed incident.

The subject of land transportation was growing more important as the increasing production of the valley demanded better markets. A daily stage line was run to Lansing during the Legislative session at express speed, leaving Grand Rapids at 4 A. M. and reaching Lansing at 7 P. M., but this wild ride over the roughest of roads only emphasized the need of improved highways, and the local newspaper said: "The great hope of this section of the state is the completion of the plank road to Lansing from Detroit, and its extension through the valley of the Grand River. We shall then be independent of the Central Railroad monopoly, the section between us and the Central will have a choice to which great avenue to resort and thus be able to beat down the high rates of freight the Central Railroad would undoubtedly charge."

The agricultural fair in the fall of 1851 was said to have surpassed all previous efforts; an address being delivered by the newly arrived Rev. Hammond; premiums being awarded, not only for agricultural products, but for farm implements, and to Blain & Cook, for edged tools; to Kingler and Tusch, for saddlery; to D. Schemerhorn for full cloth, and to Jonathan F. Chubb for cotton and wool flannel. Kendall's addition received a large part of the growth of the city and became dotted with houses. Census returns of the number of dwelling houses in the principal cities of Michigan were published in November. According to this, Detroit contained 3,144 dwelling houses, or about as many as the total of the five next cities. Those containing more dwellings than Grand Rapids were, in the order named, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Jackson, Flint, Plymouth, Ypsilanti, Ad-



rian, Tecumseh, and Marshall, Grand Rapids being the tenth city, with 489 residences, beating Pontiac by just one house, and having forty-eight more than Kalamazoo.

The great sensation of the latter part of the year was the incendiary fire by which the tannery of C. W. Taylor was burned, with a loss of \$10,000. The miscreant left a note saying: "Damn you, you have got it at last. I told you I would have revenge. Yours truly, In Trouble." Just a few weeks before, Mr. Taylor's store on Monroe street had been set on fire, and this loss of the tannery was a hard blow to him. There was universal indignation, and when it was decided that the city could not offer a reward for the arrest of the firebug, H. R. Williams personally offered \$1,000. C. W. Taylor added \$300, and the reward offer was finally brought up to \$1,600 for the conviction of the "pirate." It was thought not to have been a coincidence that the engine house on Prospect Hill was burned the same morning.

Early in January, Eleazer Donnelly, G. M. Mills, C. J. Burnham, and G. W. Fox were arrested, charged with the crime, and soon afterward were placed in the county jail, which was completed by the middle of the month, and of which they were the first occupants. G. M. Mills was placed on trial in April, and there was a great array of counsel on both sides. The prosecution was conducted by E. E. Sargeant, T. B. Church, of Grand Rapids, and J. Van Arman, of Marshall, while, for the defense, appeared Judge Goodwin, of Detroit; S. Clark, of Kalamazoo; A. F. Bell, of Ionia, and A. D. Rathbone and A. Williams, of Grand Rapids. Later, Lewis Patterson was added to the prosecution and J. C. Blanchard to the defense. The trial was a matter of interest not only in Kent, but the surrounding counties, and upon the conviction of Mills and his sentence for fifteen years, the Ionia Gazette declared that he had not had a fair trial on account of the prejudice against him. The sympathy of Grand Rapids people was undoubtedly with Mr. Taylor, and this feeling was strengthened when, in June, on account of his losses, he was obliged to offer his grist-mill and his tract of ten acres at Coldbrook, with a good house, for sale at a low price. In July, Donnelly and Fox, who had been indicted with Mills, and S. H. Matteson, who was held as a witness, escaped from the county jail, thus strengthening the belief in their guilt. In October, Matteson was arrested in Detroit, under the name of John Short, and was brought back to Grand Rapids. This arson trial attracted the more attention because Grand Rapids was remarkably free from major crimes, the only other criminal sensation of this year being the burglary of Aaron Dikeman's jewelry store, when some \$600 worth of goods and money were taken, and the thief escaped.

The more serious attention of the public was directed to improving the methods of transportation and to the affairs of the city. By the middle of January, the plank road to Kalamazoo had been located for a distance of forty-seven miles, and it was announced that work would be commenced at once. The route was as follows: From Kalamazoo to Harker's steam mill by the ravine on the Cooper road, to Anderson bridge, to Bronson, and thence to Grand Rapids, coming into the village near the plaster mill. The work was pushed, and in



June the council gave permission to grade Division street from Monroe to the south line of the city, and for the construction of the road thereon; but there was to be no toll gate within the city limits. One means of financing this project is evidenced by the announcement of J. W. Peirce, who said he would take "plank road, Illinois River, and Chicago Marine Bank money for goods, and for all debts due him." There were numerous other rail and plank road projects mooted during this year, for it was a time of great activity, and, by June the Michigan Central had reached Chicago and the marvel was witnessed of trains going from Chicago to Buffalo in thirty-four hours! At Grand Rapids, stock books were opened for a plank road, via Paris Mills, to Barns, in Allegan County, and although there was much dissatisfaction with the route selected, the entire line of the Kalamazoo road was soon placed under contract. F. H. Cuming was a promoter of a railroad planned to run from Jonesville, via Litchfield, Homer, Marshall, Bellevue, and Hastings to Grand Rapids, and an organization meeting was held at Homer. The fare to Detroit at this time was \$6.50, which was considered very high. In June, the citizens were called on for additional stock subscriptions for the Kalamazoo road, and \$4,000 was subscribed, and, by August eight assessments had been called for. The plank road was not completed during this year, and, in December, there was increased agitation for a railroad. Hiram Smith, of Homer, was president of the proposed Homer, Jonesville & Grand Rapids Railroad, and H. R. Williams, T. B. Church, and Rix Robinson represented Kent County at a meeting held to promote it. Other projects were for lines via Coldwater, and it was suggested for the first time that it might be desirable to extend a line as far as Fort Wayne. In this connection, the "Enquirer" said that a line to the south would be preferable to one to the east.

Among the newcomers in 1853 was Geo. W. Allen, who opened a general merchandise store which soon became a wholesale grocery, under the firm name of Allen & Haxton. He was a member of the Legislature, one of the incorporators of the Kent County Soldiers' Monument Association, United States Pension Agent, and one of the founders of the Grand Rapids Savings Bank. Peter Weirich came from Coblenz, Germany, via Milwaukee, and became the prosperous owner of the Michigan Brewery, was prominent in city affairs and one of the founders of the Fifth National Bank. Robert Briggs came from New York and was the first to establish an extensive dairying business, and, in November, Prof. Edward Chesbro, having completed the school census, reported the population on the east side of the river as 2,800, with 901 children of school age, and that forty-five new houses had been erected during the summer. One other improvement of importance to the community was the building of what was called Concert Hall by J. W. Peirce, over his store on old Canal street, and this became a popular center for public meetings, theatrical performances and social events. In Ada, a new town was platted at the mouth of the Thornapple on the proposed site of the expected railroad station, although the pioneer village was on the other side of the river, and a toll bridge was built. William Proctor came to Lowell, from England, purchasing a farm of 320 acres, and becoming one of the prominent men of that neighborhood. Allen

Durfee purchased a farm four miles below Grand Rapids, removing to Grand Rapids in 1868, and being well known as an undertaker and manufacturer of funeral goods. The county was greatly the loser by the death of Dr. B. S. Scoville, of Grandville. He started to his old New York home on account of failing health, but did not live to complete his journey.

Grand Rapids had passed through its pioneer days, had grown from a village into a city, laid well the foundations of the furniture business which was to make it famous, and was fully ready to play its part in the development of Michigan civilization, in the preservation of the Union and in the wonderful progress of succeeding years.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

FIRST SETTLER, LOUIS CAMPAU—THE SETTLEMENT—TOPOGRAPHY—  
EARLY SETTLERS—GRAND RAPIDS AS A CITY—LABOR MATTERS—  
PUBLIC WORKS, BUILDINGS, ETC.—PUBLIC PARKS—ORGANIZED  
CHARITIES, HOSPITALS, ETC.—NATIONAL SOLDIERS' HOME—NO-  
TABLE FIRES—FRATERNAL AND OTHER SOCIETIES—CEMETERIES.

The history of the city of Grand Rapids properly begins with its incorporation and organization under the charter, April 2, 1850, but a portion of the pioneer annals has been reserved for this chapter, in order that the record of the metropolis of the county might not be dissociated from the earlier and important events. It was at a very early period that the site of Grand Rapids first attracted attention. The name of course was chosen because of the fact that the location is at the rapids of Grand River, and it has no other significance. Long before its discovery by the white man—as well as thereafter—it was a popular meeting place or “council ground” for different tribes of Indians.

A question which has given rise to some controversy, oftentimes of such magnitude as to be entirely out of proportion to the importance of the subject, is the one as to who is entitled to the honor of being handed down in history as the first settler on the site of the present city of Grand Rapids. Many of the statements made in this connection bear the imprint of intense partisanship, rather than of historic research, and as there is little or no difference in the statement of fact by these partisans, their claims seem to become but a quibble over terms. That Louis Campau was the magnet around which civilization clustered in the beginning, and that he laid the foundation of the settlement which has developed into the city of Grand Rapids, is undeniably true. That his settlement here was antedated a number of years by other white men who, although they left no impress upon the community, and can hardly be said to have contributed to the advancement of civilization, were for a time residents here, is equally true. It is also undoubtedly true that white men visited this Grand River Valley before Indian trading posts were established, in 1821; and probably there were visitors to those posts and to the mission stations before 1833; but they were few and far between, and very few of their names are preserved. Even of those directly connected with the posts and the missions the number was not large—scarcely more than a score of persons in all. Two or three instances of early exploration are well authenticated. Chief Noonday once told Richard Godfroy that as early as 1806 a white man, a French trader, erected a cabin at Grand Rapids, but the name he did not know.

In 1827 one Samuel Holloway, a boy of seventeen years, came to Grand Rapids with a party to distribute supplies to the Indians, and assisted Louis Campau in building his log house, the first habitation for white men here. Holloway went away about 1832, just before the

Yankee settlers began to come in, and when there were but nine log cabins and shops and no frame buildings here. He never visited this place again until 1872, though at this latter date he had for three years been living within twelve miles of the city. The nine log huts referred to were doubtless three at the trading post, three at the Baptist Mission Station, and three down by the Indian village. Francis Bailey, a half-white, came here, about 1828, from Eastern Canada. He had an Indian wife and settled at the Indian village opposite the foot of the Rapids. He was a "medicine man" among them, and built a small house in which he resided until after the treaty of 1836. He then sought to get, as an Indian, the forty-acre piece of land on which he lived, to separate from the tribe and make it his permanent home. His application was rejected, he said, because he "was not full-blood Indian." He next sought to retain his home by entry under the pre-emption law, but was again repulsed, on the ground that he "was not a white man." Mr. Bailey died at or near Pentwater, in 1887, aged eighty years.

In 1854, Noah Humphrey Osborne, of Cortland County, New York, informed a friend that, in 1829, he was at the Rapids of Grand River, and for some days was sick at the wigwam of Chief Noonday, who cared for him as tenderly as if he were his own child. The late Richard Godfroy once said that, in 1834, he was informed by the older Indian chiefs here that a Frenchman named Laframboise established a trading post by their village at these Rapids, and built a cabin there, on the west side of the river, as early as about 1806. The chiefs described the hut as built of logs and bark, chinked with clay, and about thirty feet in length, and said they assisted him in making it. It has been related that as early as 1810 Pierre Constant, an agent of the American Fur Company, established a trading post on Grand River, a little distance from its mouth. Not many years later than that a French trader named Rupell was in or near the Indian village on the west side of the river near these Rapids. He died there, leaving a family in which were two or three daughters, but nothing is known concerning their subsequent history. But as white settlers of Grand Rapids, these early traders are of interest only as sort of landmarks, inasmuch as no portion of the subsequent development of this locality has been traceable to their influence or existence.

It is certain that they were not pioneers in the true sense of that word, nor can they be considered as advance agents of civilization. They did not seek to establish a colony or start a "settlement," and had the inducement to others to locate here been left to their initiative, to that of others coming later and like them, the site of what is now a thriving and considerable city would doubtless still have remained a gathering place for the red men. So it remained for another to take the first steps toward building up a civilized community and make for himself the distinction of being the founder of West Michigan's metropolis. These early French traders can properly be spoken of as the first white inhabitants, but Louis Campau is entitled to all the honor that attaches to the term of "the first pioneer citizen." It was he who made the first entry of land in the village and platted the same, and who became a member of its first board of trustees. Before Campau's time there was nothing much of Grand Rapids but the river, the blue



sky overhead and the bluffs and the swamps and the marshes round about, and the dark, unexplored wilderness surrounding it on all sides and called a part of the Territory of Michigan. The name of Grand Rapids and the name of its principal founder are as inseparably connected as the name of Watt and the steam engine are interlocked for all time. Campau's life, public services and picturesque career are part and parcel of the city's history, and it can be truthfully said that before Grand Rapids there was not much of Campau, and before Campau there was nothing at all of Grand Rapids.

Campau was the first to introduce a civilized mode of living on the banks of Grand River at the Rapids, for, as before stated, his predecessors had been simply Indian traders, who had no intention of making a permanent home and spending their days here. But when we approach the subject of Campau's life, again we meet with difficulties, for but little is known of his career before he came to Grand Rapids. No effort seems to have been made to preserve the facts and important incidents of his early history, which is due no doubt to the fact that amid the vicissitudes of a pioneer existence the early settlers gave but little thought to the importance of minor events in the lives of themselves and their neighbors who were to be the objects of interest to the future historian. The greater part of Campau's career before he came to the present site of Grand Rapids is therefore shrouded in mystery, and what little is known can be briefly stated. The following account of his career is considered as nearly accurate as any that has been published:

"Louis Campau came to Grand Rapids in 1826, and engaged in the Indian trade, under a Government license. He was born in Detroit in 1791, and was one of the soldiers surrendered by General Hull to the British in 1812. After that he was engaged with Detroit merchants in selling goods to the Indians at Saginaw. Following are the original instructions given him with his license from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, as a trader, a license upon the acceptance of which it was necessary to give bonds, and which was liable to be revoked on well-grounded complaint:

"Instructions to Louis Campau, this day licensed to trade with the Indian nation at.....

"1. Your trade will be confined to the place to which you are licensed.

"2. Your transactions with the Indians will be confined to fair and friendly trade.

"3. You will attend no Councils held by the Indians, nor send them any talk or speech, accompanied by wampum.

"4. You are forbidden to take any spirituous liquors of any kind into the Indian country; or to give, sell or dispose of any to the Indians.

"5. Should any person attempt to trade in the Indian country without a license; or should any licensed traders carry any spirituous liquors into the Indian country; or give, sell or dispose of any to the Indians, the Indians are authorized to seize and take to their own use the goods of such traders; and the owner shall have no claim on the Indians or the United States for the same.

"6. Should you learn that there is any person in the Indian country, trading without a license, you will immediately report the name of such person, and the place where he is trading, to some Indian agent.

"7. The substance of the Fifth regulation you will communicate to the Indians.

"8. You will take all proper occasions to inculcate upon the Indians the necessity of peace; and to state to them that it is the wish of their Great Father, the President, to live in harmony with them; and that they must shut their ears to any wild stories there may be in circulation.

"Given under my hand, at the city of Detroit, this 15th day of November, 1822. WILLIAM WOODBRIDGE, Secretary, and at present vested with the powers of Superintendent of Indian Affairs therein."

For such trade Louis Campau came to this valley, arriving in November, 1826, being engaged also by Mr. Brewster, of New York, to buy furs. With two assistants, he spent his first winter here at the Indian village. In the following year he built two log cabins, one for a dwelling and the other for trading uses; also a small shop, for blacksmithing and other mechanical work. These were of partially hewn timbers, and of the kind in those days denominated block houses. They were by the river bank at or near what is now Huron street, at the foot of the east side canal, and were the first buildings erected here on that side of the river, and the only ones on the east bank until six years later. Subsequently Mr. Campau made this place his permanent home, and became prominent among its pioneers. Always on friendly terms with the red men, he enjoyed with them a profitable trade, not only here but throughout the northern half of this peninsula of Michigan. His brother, Toussaint, came here in the latter part of 1827, and a few years later two other brothers—Antoine and George. These Campau families were all prominent in the early growth and development of Grand Rapids. Louis Campau was twice married. His first wife died at Saginaw. His second wife died here, in 1869, aged sixty-two. He died in 1871 at nearly eighty years of age. Toussaint died in 1872. Antoine died in 1874, aged seventy-seven. George died in 1879, aged seventy-seven. Mrs. Campau was a woman of character and good natural endowments, and was greatly esteemed among the pioneers for her kindness and generous hospitality. She acquired a good influence over the Indians, because through long association with them she became thoroughly familiar with their language, customs and habits; and this influence was always used to foster the interests of the whites and promote the advancement of civilization.

### THE SETTLEMENT.

It was in 1832, as already stated, that Campau and his assistants laid out the little town between the river and the present Division street, and it is from that date that the history of Grand Rapids, as a hamlet or village, may be said to begin. The village was a small and insignificant one, given up to Indian trading, and for a time its history was nearly devoid of interest. Like the knife-grinder, it had



no story to tell, and the narrator of what little gossip there is about it may be told, as Macaulay was about his "History of England," that it is his story, and not history. Still, within the succeeding months and years the foundations were laid for the city as it exists today, and it does not do for cities, any more than individuals, to despise the day of small beginnings. It was for years prior to the first Anglo-Saxon arrival prominent as a trading post; it has always, too, kept pace with the growth of the great West, and has always had reason to congratulate itself that its founders had some conception, even if an inadequate one, of the great prospect before it.

Nothing more than a trading post could have been claimed for the place prior to 1831, and in fact the maps of the Territory of Michigan of that date indicated a trading post at the rapids of the Grand River. But Louis Campau was here, and his brother, Toussaint Campau, had also settled near him, while members of the Marsac family and other French Canadians were occasional visitors to the post. The vanguard of "settlers," using that word in contra-distinction to "Indian traders," came in the summer of 1833, when Joel Guild, Barney Burton, Josiah Burton, Eliphalet H. Turner, and others came here to establish homes. These pioneers had journeyed hither from the State of New York, and had been a long time in making the trip, traveling with horses and wagon through a country which bore no evidence of having been previously traversed by vehicles of any description. They had been attracted to the West by reports concerning its wonderful resources, which had traveled back to the Eastern States immediately after the close of the Black Hawk War. And when they learned that fine lands lying on the Grand River had been ceded by the Indians to the United States Government, and that said lands were open for settlement, they concluded to move to this point; and with their coming the Anglo-Saxon settlement of Grand Rapids began. They lived during the winter of 1833-34 in the home of Mr. Guild and the buildings of Mr. Campau, in some cases men doing their own cooking and living in much the same manner as the traders and adventurers who had preceded them. But their plans and purposes were of an entirely different character—they were home-seekers, and came for the purpose of becoming permanent residents. Barney Burton came in from Ypsilanti. He became prominent in the township of Paris, where he improved an excellent farm, yet he always seemed identified with the city, into which he moved and spent the closing years of his life, a respected, thoroughly upright and conscientious citizen. He was born in Greenfield, Saratoga County, New York, March 16, 1807. Josiah Burton located two or three tracts of land, and settled on the east side of Division street; afterward lived on West Bridge street. These brothers both served the public acceptably in official positions. Eliphalet H. Turner was the first clerk of the township of Grand Rapids. He settled in what is now the southeast portion of the city, but soon moved into the village, and in 1845-6 built him a home on Front street, near the head of the rapids—the first stone dwelling of note on the west side. He was a mechanic, assisted in erecting a number of the very early buildings on Monroe and Waterloo streets, and was associated with James Scribner in the erection of the first bridge across Grand River here. He was a sturdy yeoman of the old stamp, faithful to all trusts and duties. He died in 1870, aged 78 years.





ORIGINAL SKETCH OF GRAND RAPIDS—1831

Made by Rev. M. Booth from the spot which is now part of Campau Square,  
Near Foster & Stevens Store





In the spring of 1834, the trading station at the rapids of the Grand River, which for years had been the meeting place of the traders with their customers, the Indians, had developed into a white settlement with a total population of about twenty men. Some of those men had families, and a number of women joined their husbands here in the summer of 1834; but Mrs. Joel Guild and her daughters have passed into history as the first female residents of Grand Rapids who were not of mixed French and Indian extraction. Richard Godfroy, who had previously been an Indian agent or trader at Saline, near the headwaters of Grand River, came here to stay when the Spring opened, and Antoine Campau and Daniel D. Whiteman came early in the year. Andrew Robbins, Daniel North, and Robert M. Barr arrived here about the first of May. Besides those mentioned, a considerable number of travelers, land-seekers, and adventurers, visited and passed through Grand Rapids during the summer, but if one may judge from the few who became actual settlers, a comparatively small number of those who saw the place were favorably impressed with it. In addition to those whose names are given above, Joseph S. Potter, Ezekial W. Davis, Julius C. Abel, Ephraim P. Walker, William McCausland, Louis Moran, Robert Howlett, Aaron Sibley, and Willard Sibley, and a number of others became actual settlers before the close of the year 1834. Some of them began the construction of saw-mills, from which was obtained, a little later, building material for many of the dwellings, stores, shops and offices erected by early settlers. In this way they paved the way for improvements of a more substantial character than any that had been made up to that time.

Richard Godfroy, immediately after his arrival, built a commodious dwelling on the southeast corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets. This building was destroyed by fire in January, 1850, it having in the meantime been converted into a Catholic chapel. Mr. Godfroy lived to a good old age, and died at Muskegon. Antoine Campau began trade at the foot of Monroe street. He afterward built a residence on the south side of Monroe street, a short distance above the Waterloo corner, and lived there until about 1845, when he moved upon his farm on South Division street. He was a man of fine presence, over six feet in stature, straight and erect, of noble carriage, manly and affable toward high and low, of sterling integrity, kind and courteous always, humane and sympathetic, and scrupulously punctual and exact in all his business affairs. He had the entire confidence of the Indians, with whom he dealt largely. It was said that he was the first born white at Saginaw. He first came to Grand Rapids in 1833, and moved here with his family a year later. Of those who came in 1834, Robert M. Barr was the last survivor, and he continued a resident of Grand Rapids until his death, which occurred Nov. 7, 1910, when he lacked but three months of being 99 years old. Joseph S. Potter was among the first builders, and erected the Eagle Hotel, in 1834. Ezekiel W. Davis lived a little time in a log cabin here, planted some corn near the corner of Ottawa and Fountain streets, moved to a farm at Reed's Lake, where he was the first settler, lived there about thirty years, then moved into the city, where he died in 1873.

The first practicing lawyer in Kent County was Julius C. Abel, who came to Grand Rapids in 1834. He was a surveyor of land, and a



self-made lawyer, of whom many good jokes were told in later years by older members of the bar. Physically, he was a large man, the possessor of a stentorian voice, which sometimes, it was said, won him cases which common sense would have pronounced bad ones. He was a man of mark among the pioneers, brought by his profession into contact with nearly all of them in ways that created many warm friendships as well as some strong enmities. He died in 1871.

Louis Moran came here as a clerk for Louis Campau, in 1833, stayed but a short time and then went up the Thornapple River, where for a while he kept the tavern at Scales' Prairie, near Middleville. He came back to Grand Rapids in 1837 and was landlord of the Eagle Hotel. He was made comparatively poor by the financial crash of 1837, and for many years thereafter drove teams as proudly as ever he hired others to drive for him. Moran was a man of powerful frame, over six feet tall, erect and self-poised, honest, and had almost unbounded faith in human honesty. "How much does your load come to?" he would ask of the farmer of whom he purchased a load of hay. Receiving a reply, he would throw down a handful of money, with the remark, "Count it out," after which he would carefully put the rest in his pocket, in full confidence that the farmer had counted it correctly. Late in life he received the use of the proceeds of some valuable property in Detroit, part of his father's estate, which enabled him to live in quiet and comfort thereafter. Few men among the pioneers had more or warmer friends than Louis Moran.

Aaron Sibley built and lived in the house on Prospect Hill which was afterward in the village days used as a school house. Willard Sibley was a navigator upon the river about as soon as there were any boats to command, and was a popular steamboat captain for many years. His homestead was on the west side of the river, near the old Indian village.

There were numerous evidences that the place was becoming known to the outside world to some extent as early as 1834, notwithstanding the fact that the settlement showed but slight growth, and in 1835 the foundation of Grand Rapids as a place of importance was actually laid. In that year began the subdivision of lands into small parcels, the laying out of streets and the grouping of buildings, which are distinctive features of an urban settlement.

A Fourth of July celebration was held in the little village in 1834, which shows that the inhabitants, though few in number, were filled with patriotism. This was the first celebration of the kind ever held in Grand Rapids, and it is doubtful if there has been one since that was filled with more enjoyment to the participants. Alvin Wansey was captain on parade, and nearly every other man in the settlement was next in rank. They formed a procession on the Indian path where Monroe street was afterward located. Robert M. Barr was at the head with his fiddle. They marched up the trail and down and about, and sang and shouted, and fiddled and hurraed. Many Indians joined in the sport. They went across the river and had more marching, and Chief Blackskin laughed then if he ever did at any time in his life. Then they had a ride down the river and back in bateaux.



## TOPOGRAPHY.

The original topography of the city as it appeared in 1846 is thus given in substance by Albert Baxter, in his "History of the City of Grand Rapids," published nearly a half-century after his first visit to the place:

It is not easy by mere verbal description to convey a good idea of the original face of the country at Grand Rapids. The site was one of great natural beauty, charming for its great variety of features in landscape. The valley here is about one and a half miles wide, threaded by a stream near forty rods wide.

On the west side, from the river back to the bluffs, an average distance of about one mile, and through the length of the city north and south, was a very nearly level plain, a large part of which was thickly strewn with granite boulders and a profusion of cobble stone or "hard-heads." There was some undulation of surface, but no very marked unevenness. Its elevation was but ten or twelve feet above the water of the river, in the average, and the descent to the south was but slight in the distance of two miles. On the part north of Bridge street there were very few large trees at the front, but further toward the hills was in places a heavy growth of maple and elm, and a swamp a little below the general level. South of Bridge street the land was slightly rolling, and a ravine held a small stream, bringing the drainage from the northern swampy or springy grounds. This brook entered the river about midway between where are now the Bridge and Pearl street bridges. Toward the southwest corner of the city was a marsh of considerable extent, and a shallow pond. Skirting near the bluffs was an irregular depression or ravine, the bed of a brook that entered the river below the town, and into and through which, in periods of high water, there was sometimes an overflow from the river above the rapids. Near the northwest corner was a hill or ridge of coarse gravel, some forty feet high, much of which is still there. The bluffs in the distance west were a handsome range of hills, rising to a height of sixty feet or more, and shutting off the view of the country beyond.

On the east side there was greater irregularity of surface, hill and dale, and many points of picturesque beauty. Next the river was a narrow border of nearly level land, varying in width from two or three rods to one-fourth of a mile. North of Bridge street (now Michigan street) this was a long, narrow, black-sand swamp. Below Monroe street was a gently sloping plat, mostly dry ground but patched here and there with boggy places. Below Fulton street was a gravel and clay ridge of irregular outline, near the river, extending southward. Near the center of the town an isolated hill of very hard clay, with a steep western face, rose from a point some ten or twelve rods north of Lyon street, east of Kent street (now Bond avenue), and extended south to Monroe street. Its southern face was also a steep declivity. Its southwestern angle was less than two hundred feet from the river bank, and its highest point was near or slightly south of Pearl street, west of Ottawa. Pearl, Lyon and Ottawa streets have been cut through that clayey bank, and the last vestige of it disappeared in the early nineties. It was called Prospect Hill. Toward the east and southeast this hill sloped off gently. Between it and Division street was a depression through which ran northerly a spring brook, and



near where the postoffice building stands was a swamp, and a pond of an acre or more in extent.

The commanding eminence upon the east side was a sand bluff with a steep western face, that still retains some of its original features, its base at an average distance of perhaps fifty rods from the river, and extending from Coldbrook on the north to beyond Fulton street on the south, a distance of more than a mile and a half. On the summit of this hill, for nearly its whole length, was a plateau, averaging but a few rods in width near the north end, but spreading out at the southeast far into the country. In some places at the summit this hill top was nearly level, but for the most part was undulating and towards the edges cut by ravines leading to the lower lands. Its greatest elevation was and still is about one hundred and sixty feet above the adjacent river bed. From the summit of this hill, and also from the hill range west of town, very fine views of the city and the surrounding country are obtained. Just north of Michigan street, half way up the hillside, was a cluster of cedars in the midst of which came out a very large spring of excellent water.

The valley of the Coldbrook, winding northwesterly, beyond the sandhills, marked the division between them and the rolling or undulating northeast portion of the city. The face of that part of the town is somewhat changed by grading and other improvements, but its general outline features remain. Along the streams and ravines and toward the river was some heavy timber, chiefly oak, maple and elm. Along the range line (Division avenue) to the south end of the city was a swampy, muddy region, some portions of it bearing heavy timber, and a short distance west of that was a long, narrow, swampy, tamarack vale, then nearly impassable but now traversed by the railroads coming in from the south and southeast; and between this and the river, and along down to Plaster Creek, was a region broken by hills, except the narrow belt of bottom land, and all this latter, or nearly all, was quite heavily timbered. Considerable tracts of the wooded lands in and about the city remained for near a quarter of a century favorite hunting grounds.

Most of the smaller streams and water courses that once meandered these city grounds are now gone from sight. Sewer drainage carries them in scores of underground conduits to the river. Above the north line of the city, on the west side, runs the Indian Mill Creek, which enters the river near the railroad bridge. The brook which once ran across Bridge street, and through a ravine into the river south of that street, is now deep in the ground and conducted beneath the canal on that side, through a culvert. Near two miles east of the southern part of the city are Reed's and Fisk Lakes. They are the source of the main stream of Coldbrook, which runs northwesterly and comes into the north part of the city, discharging into the river a little north of Coldbrook street. Carrier Creek is a northern branch of Coldbrook, which still runs in or near its original bed; but most of the water of both streams is diverted by pumping to the hill reservoir and used in the city supply. Turning again to the southward, there was once a pretty brooklet coming from that part of the town called Bostwick's addition, crossing Division avenue, and near where the Union railroad station now is joining another brook that came in from a

swamp a short distance south; thence flowing to the river near where is the Fulton street bridge. This is also now conveyed in sewers and culverts. Still further south came a stream from numerous springs on Blakeley's addition and beyond, which crossed Division avenue at the north part of the Grant addition tract, ran down a ravine across the Grandville road and into the river below where the gas works are located. At the point where this stream passes out from the low hills there, at an early day, a dam and race were constructed and a small building erected for a turning lathe and other light machinery, which were worked for a few years. Another noticeable rivulet had its rise from springs along and south of Fountain, and from that street, a little west of Division, flowed northerly through a pond bordered by flags and willows, and along where the postoffice building is, passed well out toward Crescent avenue near Ionia street, rounded the north end of Prospect Hill and followed closely its western base back nearly to Lyon street; thence from Kent street (now Bond avenue), turned westerly and half way to Canal street (now an extension of Monroe avenue), where was another pond; thence flowed northwesterly across a miry place in Canal street and into the river near Erie street. That brook is also out of sight now, and discharges through the Kent alley sewer.

Improvements, public and private, have very much changed the face of the city, and the end is not yet. Its present features need not be dwelt upon here. Nearly all the lower sink holes and bogs have been filled to new grades, and made dry land. Other parts that were once miry from springs have been reclaimed by sewerage. Much filling has been done in Market street and vicinity, and from that east to Division street, which has also been so much changed each way from the Island street crossing, that where once were sharp, short and very muddy clay hills, is now an easy grade and a dry and well surfaced thoroughfare. A large tract at and about the Union Station grounds, formerly, at times, submerged by river freshets, has been made solid ground for the heavy business done in that locality. Streets below the hills on the east side have been raised generally, and a vast work has been done in excavating and grading at the hill summits. The esthetic beauty of the place as it was in nature is gone; its beauty now pertains to business uses, and the embellishments of modern civilized life and taste.

### EARLY SETTLERS.

We will now return and take up events that were important in their way in laying the foundation of the splendid city at the rapids of the Grand River. The survey of the plat of the embryo village was made in 1833. The United States survey of public lands in Kent County had been made in 1831. John Mullett surveyed town seven north, range eleven west, and Lucius Lyon surveyed town seven, range twelve. From these the city of Grand Rapids is chiefly taken. It should be stated in this connection that in the treaties made with the Ottawa Chippewa and Pottawatomie Indians by Governor Cass and Solomon Sibley, as commissioners of the general government, at Chicago, in 1821, the Indians ceded all the lands south of the main stream of the Grand River, with certain small reservations for individual Indians



and half-breeds, and a few small tracts for the use of the tribes. And in the treaty of 1836, made at Washington, the Indians ceded to the United States the lands north of Grand River, which they had long claimed as their own. The survey made by Lyon was designed to include, of course, only lands already ceded by the Indians, but in order to fill out the two townships the survey was extended west and north of the river into lands which had been reserved to the red men by treaty stipulations until 1836. All the lands in that portion of the city east of the river were "located," as the settlers termed it, and purchased of the general government prior to 1836. But the earliest patent on the west side was dated Aug. 13, 1839. However, most of the lands there were pre-empted or occupied by "squatters" very soon after the treaty was made, and some of them much earlier, as already stated, and these claims to the tracts of which possession had been taken were generally respected, in accordance with the unwritten law relative to the occupation of the public lands. Plans and purposes for the future were matters of interest to incoming settlers, and the intention of Campau to lay out a town-site had its influence upon those who came here to "spy out the land" and seek homes for themselves and families. As soon as the town was laid out sales of lots commenced, many applications having been made before the surveyor's notes were transferred to paper. In fact, Campau made his first sale of a lot to Joel Guild early in June, 1833. Many people bought lots who did not immediately build on them. This is always the case with new towns. In some cases householders may have bought the lots adjoining them, for garden and pasturage, not an unusual thing to do. On April 4, 1834, the first election was held in Grand Rapids and the whole number of votes cast was nine. The law authorizing the election was passed by the Legislative Council of the Territory of Michigan, but in addition to this was the law of necessity, which required that some provision should be made for the government of the settlement, and a supervisor, a township clerk, two assessors, an overseer of highways, two constables, a collector, a poor-master, and three fence viewers were elected. No school inspectors were elected, because, no doubt, it was reasonably certain that there were no schools to inspect. And there was not much necessity for the election of fence-viewers, as at that time there were probably no fences in Grand Rapids, or in Kent County for that matter, to "view." But these early settlers were from the Eastern States where the "town" system of government prevailed, and they evidently were determined to have the full complement of local officials.

The vote cast at this election would indicate that there had not been a large addition in population to the new settlement during the year 1833 and the first three months of 1834; and this fact is further evidenced by the burden of official honors heaped upon two or three of the pioneer citizens. It is plainly impossible to give the names of all those who became settlers of Grand Rapids during the pioneer period of its history, but as the year 1834 was when it secured its start a peculiar interest is attached to those who sought a domicile here in that and the preceding year. In addition to those already mentioned, the following is believed to be an approximately correct list of those who became actual settlers in the years 1833, 1834 and 1835: William



R. Godwin, Gideon H. Gordon, James Gordon, Warner Dexter, Luther Lincoln, Ira Jones, Nathaniel P. Roberts, Sylvester Sibley, Myron Roys, Joseph B. Copeland, Henry West, Andrew D. W. Stout, James Archibald, Jonathan F. Chubb, Jared Wansey, James Watson, Lewis Reed, Porter Reed, Ezra Reed, Joel Sliter, James Sliter, Horace Gray, Hiram Hinsdill, Lyman Gray, William R. Barnard, Abram S. Wadsworth, Edward Guild, Martin Ryerson, Darius Winsor, Cyrus Jones, James Clark, Lucius Lyon, Jefferson Morrison, John Almy, William Hinsdill, Dwight Lyman, James Lyman, William H. Godfroy, Joseph Marion, N. O. Sargeant, Dr. Stephen A. Wilson, Dr. Charles Shepard, David S. Leavitt, Demetrius Turner, Rev. Andreas Viszoczky, Justus C. Rogers, Edward Feakins, Abraham Laraway, Amos Hosford Smith, Leonard G. Baxter, Alanson Cramton, and Charles G. Mason. A number of these gentlemen grew to prominence in the county and State, and have already been given extended personal mention on other pages of this work.

William R. Godwin settled in Wyoming Township, as did also the Gordons and Myron Roys. Luther Lincoln came to the valley in 1832, was a moving and somewhat eccentric character; first in Grandville, then in Grand Rapids building a mill, then up Flat River, where he was called "Trapper Lincoln." His longest residence was at or near Greenville, toward the close of his life. He is accredited with doing the first plowing on Grand River, and raising corn in 1833, where the village of Grandville now stands. Ira Jones settled eventually on the west side of the river, near the Indian village, and there resided some forty years. Nathaniel P. Roberts, who came in with Josiah Burton, Ira Jones, and E. H. Turner, in 1833, settled on the west side and resided there until his death, in 1871, at the age of 74 years. He was a farmer, and a highly respected citizen. Jonathan F. Chubb, soon after his arrival, took a farm in Wyoming Township, where he lived nearly twenty years; then moved into town and built him a stone residence on Front, near Leonard street, where he spent the remainder of his life. He took an interest in manufacturing farming implements. He was a public-spirited citizen of the early mould, almost puritanic in convictions, and thoroughly respected.

Porter Reed came from Ilion, Herkimer County, New York, where he was born July 11, 1812. He came with the pioneers of 1833, and his was the first family to locate a home on the shore of Reed's Lake, which thus got its name. His brothers—Lewis and Ezra—located on Government land nearby, taking a quarter of a section each. Porter cleared up a fine farm, but did not survive long to enjoy it, dying in 1857. His brother, Ezra Reed, was a most excellent pioneer citizen. He afterward lived many years in Grand Rapids, and was the first sheriff of Kent County, elected in 1836. He died at Muskegon, in June, 1888, at the venerable age of 88 years.

James Sliter and his brother, Joel Sliter, came to Grand River Valley in 1832, and located in what came to be known as Wyoming Township, Kent County, but later came to Grand Rapids. James located, in 1834, on South Division street, 160 acres, also some land in the then village. In 1845 he retired to his farm near Grandville and there made his home until his death, at the age of 48 years.

Hiram Hinsdill lived in the summer of 1835 in a log house on Pearl street, near where the Arcade is, meantime engaged in building



the hotel afterward known as the National, on the site of the present Morton House. He lived a quiet life and was remembered with much affection by early residents.

Darius Winsor and family, who came with the pioneer colony to Ionia in 1833, and down to the Rapids in the following year, were among those who gave impulse and vigor to the young settlement. Darius was the second postmaster here, and served as a town officer for some years. Before coming he had been a victim of the hard eastern law of imprisonment for debt, hence had little capital to start with in these woods other than the stout hearts and sturdy energy of himself and his boys—Zenas G. and Jacob W. Winsor. They built them a log house at Ionia, and were the first to transport household goods for the colonists by pole boats up Grand River from its mouth. A portion of their lumber for building at Ionia was carried in small boats from the Indian mission mill at Grand Rapids.

John Almy and wife came with the Kent company, in 1835. He was a native of Rhode Island, a finely educated man, a civil engineer and practical surveyor of eminence. He platted for Lucius Lyon and N. O. Sargeant the "Village of Kent," in which Charles H. Carroll afterward purchased a half interest. Mrs. Almy, in a journal kept by her, in 1835, gives some account of their journey here. The following is an extract:

"Night brought us to the Thornapple, and it being late, and very dark, we dared not go on for fear we should fall into the river. We saw, near by, some camp-fires of Indians, but going to them, they fled, and we could not get near them; so we camped out as well as we could, and spent the night with nothing to eat. As soon as daylight appeared, we commenced our march, and crossing the Thornapple, met Rix Robinson and the chiefs, who were coming to see us, and what kind of people we were. Mr. Robinson explained to them that we were friends, and going to build a big town down at Grand Rapids. Here we were furnished breakfast—pork and potatoes, bread and tea, with wild honey (considered an extra dish), with short-cake; and did we not do justice to that meal? After settling our bills, we proceeded on our journey, and having Plaster Creek and several other streams to bridge, we were the whole day until late at night in getting to Grand Rapids. Richard Godfroy and Louis Campau gave us quarters in their respective homes. The next day the woods rang out with the echo of the woodman's axe, slaying down trees to build shanties with, and all was bustle and business. It did not take long to get settled, and then commenced the work of laying out the canal. Mr. Almy soon found it necessary to return to Detroit, which was no easy matter, and I concluded to go, too. Richard Godfroy sent his Frenchman with a lumber wagon to take us. We were ten days going. While in Detroit Mr. Almy bought a steamboat, and friends named her the "John Almy." She was loaded with pork, flour, mill-stones, and many other useful articles, to be landed at Grand Rapids. The boat left about April 1, and had very rough weather, and as she neared Thunder Bay she was wrecked—a total loss."

About two years later Mr. Almy was in charge of the improvement of Grand and Kalamazoo Rivers. During his life he held many important positions of official trust, was a lawyer by profession,



and a trusty counselor, but did not practice law after coming to Michigan. He was of fine physical form, a representative gentleman of the early days, genial, courteous, hospitable, and beloved by all with whom he came in contact. He was very methodical and exact in his business, and a scientific man of much general information. He died Sept. 29, 1863, leaving a memory fondly cherished by all the early residents of the valley. In religious sentiment he was an Episcopalian.

James Lyman and Dwight Lyman, brothers, opened a small store on Waterloo (now Market) street, opposite the Eagle Hotel, in 1835. They came from Connecticut. In the following year they sold the store to George C. Nelson. The Lymans built or were interested in a mill which for nearly forty years stood on Coldbrook, just below where now is Creston Park. In 1844, James married and resumed trade, soon sold out, spent some years at Kenosha, Wis., and then returned to business here. He died in 1869, enjoying the love and esteem of the community as a thoroughly upright, conservative citizen, neighbor and business man. In 1838 James Lyman, with John Almy and another, had charge of a survey of Grand River, in which they ran levels from Lyons, or above, on the ice, to Grand Haven, ascertaining the amount of fall at various points.

William H. Godfroy was the first hotel keeper; afterward a merchant, and both he and his brother John had considerable trade with the Indians as long as the natives remained near this place. Joseph Marion was a carpenter and joiner and patternmaker, and an excellent workman at his craft. He lived here many years and finally went west.

Nathaniel O. Sargeant was the contractor for digging the mill-race, and had an interest therein—the beginning of the east side canal. He came here from Massachusetts, in 1835, with a company of men for that work. They marched in with their picks and shovels on their shoulders. At their head was Alanson Cramton, playing a bugle. Cramton was a teamster, stage driver and mail carrier, and assisted many pioneers over the rough roads. He afterward settled in Ada and became a thriving farmer in that township. Hearing the noise and the music, when the canal men came, Chief Noonday thought the company were enemies, meaning mischief to Louis Campau, and sent a message to the latter, offering aid to drive the invaders away. Among the men in this company was also Leonard G. Baxter, from Montpelier, Vt., who settled here, married Emily Guild, and spent his life in the city and in the country near by. He died in 1866. The coming of these men for that work marked an important era in the improvement and development of the place. Mr. Sargeant died a year or two after he came.

Stephen A. Wilson was the first physician to settle within the limits of Grand Rapids. He was born in Herkimer county, New York, in 1810. He graduated at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, at Fairfield, and after practicing in his native town for a short time, removed to Grand Rapids, in August, 1835. He and Dr. Charles Shepard were partners from the spring of 1837 until the fall of 1839, when the partnership was dissolved by Dr. Wilson's death. He died after a relapse of typhoid fever. Dr. Shepard was born July 18, 1812, in Fairfield, Herkimer County, New York. He began the study of medicine at the age of 18, and



graduated at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in his native town, in 1835. After practicing six months in Jefferson County, New York, he removed to Grand Rapids, arriving Oct. 20, 1835, and was the second physician to settle within the limits of the present city. He continued to practice his profession here almost until the time of his death, which occurred March 8, 1893. As a surgeon he took high rank. He served as president of the Grand Rapids Medical and Surgical Society four times, in the period from 1858 to 1881; was a member of the Michigan State Medical Society, of which he was the president in 1886; member of the International Medical Congress after the meeting in Philadelphia, in 1876; member of the American Microscopical Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Medical Association. He served as alderman in the Common Council of 1853 and 1854, and was elected mayor of the city in 1855. Late in life he was chief of staff at the U. B. A. Hospital and consulting gynecologist to St. Mark's Hospital.

Demetrius Turner was born in the town of Essex, Conn., Feb. 25, 1815, a son of Elisha Turner, who removed with his family to Rochester, N. Y., in 1820. Being of a mechanical turn of mind and a natural genius, Demetrius early learned to work at the machinist's trade. He mastered the art without serving an apprenticeship, seeming to have a natural talent for acquiring a knowledge of the trade without an instructor. In 1835 he came to Grand Rapids and the following year became engineer in a saw-mill, where he remained two years. He was then employed as engineer on a steamboat, remaining on the waters about ten years. In 1864 he built the engines for the steamer "L. G. Mason," in Grand Rapids. This steamer afterward plied on the Saginaw River, between East Saginaw and Bay City. In 1869 Mr. Turner remodeled the engines of the steamer "Daniel Ball," which afterward burned at Saginaw, and he built the first water-works at Grand Rapids, the engines being of his own invention, on which he afterward received a patent.

Jacob W. Winsor was but a lad of 18 years when he came to Grand Rapids, in 1834. He was born at Skaneateles, N. Y., June 11, 1816. He was a son of Darius and Sally Winsor, who came with the Dexter colony to Ionia in the Spring of 1833, to which place he also came in the same year. It is related that on his way he had purchased an Indian pony, and before arriving at his destination was one night beleaguered by wolves, whereupon he tied the pony and betook himself to a tree top until daylight, thus escaping the wolves but losing his pony. He was an energetic young man, and ready for almost any creditable adventure, turning his hand with alacrity to whatever work he could find to do. During the first three or four years here, he was engaged in the Indian trade, in the employ of others, and learned to speak the Indian language fluently. At the time of the great flood in the river, in the early part of 1838, at much peril to himself, he caught a flat-bottomed boat which came down with the ice, and by its use rescued a family from the upper part of a building that was surrounded by the raging waters at the foot of Huron street. In 1844 he engaged in building, for himself, the Faneuil Hall block, which stood above the head of Market on Monroe street. With but little means, but indefatigable energy, he drew stone from the river, and in the fol-



lowing year completed a contract of which time was the essence, thereby holding his lot and the building. From that time onward through life he was ever the rough-and-ready, energetic, bustling, pushing citizen, known to all residents; outspoken in opinion, jocose, combative in action, putting on no airs, making no polished pretenses, yet tender and sympathetic, with open hand and charitable impulses. In partnership with his brother Zenas, the two had for some years an extensive business in trade and in lumbering. In 1851 he erected a neat stone house for a residence, on Washington street. Several years later he removed and built another pretty house a little east of what was then the city limits. Mr. Winsor had unbounded faith in the growth of Grand Rapids, and in the development of resources possessed, and attempts to develop others then supposed to exist, he invested boldly his means and his labor, often to meet with failure and disappointment, but opening lines of business afterward of benefit to others more sluggish and less adventurous. He was married, Nov. 27, 1838, to Miss Harriet Peck, who was also one of the pioneers. He died Dec. 26, 1874, leaving a widow, two sons and three daughters. To the early development and later growth of this city, the labors of Mr. Winsor contributed no small share.

John F. Godfroy came to Grand Rapids in 1837, when but thirteen years old. Even at that early age he had been engaged in the Indian trade, with his older brother and with the Ewings of Indiana. He was born at Detroit, July 4, 1824. His business in connection with the fur trade carried him over the entire State and the Lake Superior country, made him acquainted with the representative men of both white and Indian races, and especially influential among the latter. In Grand Rapids he afterward settled down to mercantile and real estate dealings. He was averse to holding public official positions, but was chosen, in 1853, and served as recorder of the city for one term. He was three times married—first, to Lucilia Genereaux; second, to Mary St. Aubin; third, to Adelaide M. Moross, who survived him. He was a man of genial sociability, kind hearted, intelligent, and honorable, and a devout adherent of the Roman Catholic faith. He died at his home in this city, Jan. 25, 1876.

The speculative fever had not yet become epidemic in Grand Rapids, in 1835, and not much real estate changed hands, neither was there much done in the way of making building improvements. The most important building of the previous year was the erection of the Eagle Hotel by J. S. Potter and Louis Campau, and in 1837 the Kent Hotel, afterward known as the Bridge Street House, was built by or for Charles H. Carroll. The last mentioned structure became somewhat famous as a pioneer hostelry, was known at one time as the Grand River Exchange, then the Bridge Street House, and it remained in use until 1913, when it was torn down. Hiram Hinsdill erected a hotel in 1835, on the corner of Monroe and Ionia streets, and it was purchased by Myron Hinsdill and by him opened for business the following year under the name of Hinsdill's Hotel. It was later called the National Hotel and was on the site of the present Morton House. Although a postoffice had been established at the Indian mission on the west side of the river, in 1832, it was not until 1836 that a regularly established postoffice was given the white settlement,



and Darius Winsor was then appointed postmaster. This was considered as another evidence of the advancement of civilization during the year. Religious services began to be held regularly in the new settlement, the Catholics having had a mission here since June, 1833, and in the winter of 1835-36 the first regular Methodist Church service was held with Rev. Osbond Monett as the officiating minister. Several dwellings were erected during the year 1835, Campau moved into a new frame building which afterward became known as the Rathbun House, and James Lyman and Jefferson Morrison set up stores and commenced trading. The greater number of those who came to the embryo city in 1835 were unmarried men, or if married, they left their wives behind until they had selected a place for settlement. A few of the new settlers, however, had families, and the first child born in Grand Rapids of purely white parents and permanent residents was a daughter of Antoine Carmell, born June 21, 1834, and christened Therese Carmell. The first male child born in the settlement was Lewis Burton, who became a farmer near the village of Ada. He was born Oct. 5, 1834.

Although the Government land office was opened in Ionia in the fall of 1836, a peculiarity of the land laws of that period made it impossible for settlers to obtain even a shadow of the title to the lands which they occupied north and west of Grand River until such lands were offered for sale in 1839. Those who came here in 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, and 1838, except such persons as purchased lots on the east side of the river, were all "squatters" on public lands, in danger of being compelled to pay for the improvements which they themselves made, when the lands were offered for sale at public auction, or of being ousted from their possessions by those who could outbid them. The dangers which threatened them made it necessary for the early settlers to organize themselves into associations designed to facilitate the settlement of disputes among themselves, to protect themselves against lawless adventurers, and for the maintenance of their rights against the unrestrained competition of speculators. The lands of the mission properties south of Bridge street were the subject of some strife between the representatives of the Catholic and those of the Baptist mission. This was finally adjusted by sales giving to the Catholics \$8,000 and to the Baptists \$12,000. Against that disposition, however, Isaac Turner and Willard Sibley vigorously protested, they having "located" upon the premises in the Spring of 1836, under the expectation that after the Indian treaty the land would be open for such settlement, by pre-emption or purchase. Other tracts, selected by State commissioners as university or public building lands, were finally sold on appraisal by the State. By legislative act of March 25, 1840, it was directed that they be thus sold to actual settlers, or in case the settlers should not purchase at the appraised value they should have the use of the lands for such time as should be equivalent to, or compensation for, their improvements, as determined by the commissioners. An act passed Feb. 9, 1842, directed that certificates of purchase be issued to E. H. Turner and James Scribner for lots 3 and 4, in fractional Section 24, township 7 north, range 12 west, at the rate of \$12 per acre for lot 3 and \$14 per acre for lot 4; to Willard Sibley for lot 2, fractional Section 25, at \$16 per acre; to



Charles G. Mason for lot 2, Section 24, at \$10 per acre, and the west half of the northwest quarter of the same section at \$2 per acre, and to Jules Marion for the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 25, at \$5 per acre. The terms of payment, as prescribed by the act of 1840, were: One-tenth cash down and the rest in annual installments of the same amount, with interest at 7 per cent. The parcels assigned to Charles G. Mason, as above specified, were finally conveyed to Smith & Van Allen; that assigned to Willard Sibley went to the representative of the Catholic mission, and for that originally assigned to Jules Marion the certificate was issued to James Scribner. Law-suits over the titles of some of these lands vexed the courts and fed lawyers for several years. They comprise now a valuable and handsome portion of the city; but for years some of the original claimants, or their near friends, told pitiful stories of the manner in which they deemed themselves to have been swindled out of their just property rights.

Isaac Turner was a native of Clinton County, New York, and came from Plattsburgh to Grand Rapids, in 1836, with his family. He tarried for a brief time on the east side of the river, and then moved across, making the pre-emption claim heretofore mentioned. He lived for many years in a small house pleasantly situated a short distance above where now is the west end of the Pearl street bridge. He was an excellent millwright, and his handiwork contributed to the erection of many of the earlier mills in this vicinity and on Muskegon River. In early life he was a Whig, then a Republican, and in religious matters became a firm believer in spiritualism. He was enthusiastic, earnest and aggressive in support of his convictions, politically and otherwise. He did much, officially, in the early development of the city. A hater of hypocrisy, a contemner of shams, and a citizen of thorough integrity, Isaac Turner was loved and prized as a neighbor, and as a man respected and trusted. He died in 1879 at the age of 78 years.

James Scribner, a native of New York City, born in 1801, came to Grand Rapids in the winter of 1836-37, and pre-empted the land before mentioned. He was a conspicuous and somewhat eccentric character upon these streets for many years; always had several irons in the fire, and was engaged in pushing some important enterprise, sometimes failing and sometimes successful. He invented a patent medicine which he called Oak Oil. He was one of the leading men in the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad project, which he did not live to see consummated. He was also connected with the efforts to establish the manufacture of salt, which for a time seemed likely to succeed, but eventually proved unprofitable and was abandoned. He was a jolly and saucy friend, but an implacable enemy. He believed in his Oak Oil, in his city lots, in his railroad enterprises, in salt, and in himself. He was a bustling pioneer, rough and ready and alive, who made his presence known when he was about, and did a good part in the development of the town. Mr. Scribner died in 1862, leaving a warm place in the hearts of a wide circle of friends.

Comparatively few new settlers came during the year 1837, and many of those who had been considered permanent settlers returned to their old homes in "the East," or went elsewhere in "the West."



These movements were occasioned by the stagnation in affairs that followed the close of 1836. The "land craze" has been mentioned in a previous chapter, as has also the "hard times" that followed it. The activity in real estate suddenly ceased, business operations of all kinds were practically suspended, and the situation became exceedingly uncomfortable for a large portion of those who remained in Grand Rapids during the winter. Everything the people needed to live on had to be shipped in from the older communities of other states, and when the transportation facilities afforded by the open waters of Lake Michigan were suspended, prices became high and food hard to get at any price. It followed as a natural consequence that there was much suffering among the early settlers, and many of the worthy pioneers experienced hardships and privations during the winter of 1836-37, which they remembered to the end of their lives. And when the Spring opened in 1837 they were doomed to be disappointed in their hopes and expectations of a revival and continuance of the "flush times" of the year before. The financial panic of 1837 was on, and there was a stagnation of business everywhere. So far as the erection of buildings was concerned, little was done in the new settlement, but considerable progress might have been noted in other directions. In the Spring of 1838 a village government was organized, of which Henry C. Smith became the official head.

Henry C. Smith was born in Scituate, Rhode Island, Jan. 9, 1804, came to Grand Rapids in 1836, was in trade in the little village for a few years at the corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets, and afterward lived for about a quarter of a century in Plainfield Township. There he filled several offices of responsibility and trust, and was a member of the State Legislature in 1849. He returned to the city about 1868 and lived here until he died, in 1886. He was well and widely known and respected in this valley, through all his active life; a plain man, good neighbor and friend, trusty everywhere and at all times.

Among the principal events of importance in the history of Grand Rapids, in 1837, was the establishment of the Grand River Times, which occurred on April 18. It is doubtful if the town had at that time grown to sufficient size to warrant such an undertaking. The owner of the enterprise was George W. Pattison, a practical printer, but its contributors consisted of such talented men as Charles I. Walker, Sylvester Granger, Alfred D. Rathbone, and others. It was a very grave task to undertake the publication of a paper at such a time. Paper and ink had to be brought a long distance, and there were few mails. The owners persevered, however, amid all discouragements, and the paper still lives under the name of the Grand Rapids News, much heartier and stronger than when it was born. Many a similar venture has gone to the bottom in the more than eighty years that have since elapsed. It was like all the papers of its time—filled with news from abroad. The proceedings of the Legislature are given with great fullness, and of foreign news there is an abundance; but of home news very little, and of editorials, practically none. Editors, then, did not write. Nearly everything original in any newspaper of that period is communicated, and the writers all have classical signatures — "Cato," "Brutus," "Cassius," "Cicero," etc. The



young lawyers and doctors of that day probably aired their college education in this way, and seemed to be happiest when they could stir up a controversy about something. The approach of an election is perceptible by communications on the danger the country is in, which can be averted only by the election of John Smith to the Legislature. A rival newspaper, the Eagle, was established late in 1844, and the two engaged in heated controversies. Mr. Pattison sold the Times in the Spring of 1838, to Charles I. Walker, and in the same year he removed to Calhoun County. Later he lived most of his life in Detroit, where he was connected with a considerable number of newspapers for a period of about forty years. After leaving Grand Rapids he was for some years a Quaker preacher.

Charles I. Walker came in 1836, and began making investments in land hereabout, as the agent of Junius H. Hatch. The panic of 1837 put a damper on real estate speculations, and he purchased the Grand River Times, but did not keep it long. He was the first treasurer of the village of Grand Rapids. Here he began the study of law, in the office of George Martin. In 1840 he was chosen to represent this district in the Legislature, and after 1851 he resided in Detroit. Religiously, by education, he was originally a Quaker. In the fall of 1888 he visited Grand Rapids and beheld an illustration of the growth of the place during the forty years since he was village treasurer, in the new city hall, at the dedication of which he participated in the exercises. He held many positions of honor and trust in the State.

The county was organized for judicial purposes, in 1836, with the designation, of course, of Grand Rapids as the county seat, and the other principal events of that year were: The holding of the first session of circuit court in Grand Rapids, probably by Epaphroditus Ransom, but the records were burned in the fire of 1860; the Indian treaty, by which the lands in Michigan north of the Grand River were ceded to the United States, and the wonderful growth in the population of the village, the same having been estimated at five-fold.

There were numerous evidences of recovery from the extreme depression of the previous year, in 1838. The settlers were reinforced before the close of the year by such sterling characters as Wilder D. Foster, Robert I. Shoemaker, Joseph J. Baxter, John Mathison, Abraham W. Pike, and others, who helped to make the history of the city and state in later years.

Wilder D. Foster was a native of Orange County, New York. He came to Grand Rapids in 1838 and resided here until his death, which occurred Sept. 20, 1873, when he was 54 years old. He began life as a mechanic in a tin shop, and was among the founders of the hardware trade here. The prominent points of his business life, near Campau Square, are given elsewhere. For more than a quarter of a century he was at the head of a trade which made him well known throughout the State. As a successful merchant, a public-spirited citizen and an honest man, whose spoken word was the very synonym for integrity, he won the implicit confidence of all who knew him. He was an industrious, practical, earnest man, a man of principle and good judgment, and was often called to public stations of trust and responsibility. In city offices, from alderman to mayor; in the State



Legislature, and in Congress, his scrupulous fidelity won universal commendation. In politics he was an ardent Republican. He was not a church member, but a regular attendant at the Congregational Church, of which his wife was a communicant. He was married, in 1849, to Fanny Lovell, of Ionia, and his home life was a happy one. Modest, self-reliant, honest, amiable and whole-hearted, he left behind him the rich fragrance of a good name.

Robert I. Shoemaker was a native of German Flats, Herkimer County, New York, born Feb. 12, 1812. He came to Grand Rapids in April, 1838; was a carpenter and joiner, worked many years at that trade, and was a busy man all his life. He officiated as bell ringer and as sexton several years in the latter part of the village and early part of the city period. He died Sept. 23, 1893.

Joseph J. Baxter came from Vermont. He was a carpenter and millwright, and was among the pioneer wagon makers. Later he was in the livery business, grocery and feed trade, and bed spring making, successively.

John Mathison, a native of England, came here in 1838, and was a resident until his death—about forty-two years. He was a tailor, and followed that trade and the business of a merchant clothier, near the present Campau Square.

Abram W. Pike, a native of Cincinnati, Ohio, born Oct. 5, 1814, came to Michigan in 1827, and was for a time an assistant in the Indian Mission School at Niles. In 1838 he went into the employ of the Port Sheldon Company at Pigeon Lake, and had charge of a store in Grand Rapids where the east end of the Hermitage block now stands. Afterward he settled the affairs of that company, moved into Grand Rapids in 1844, and in 1845 built a comely house on the south side of Fulton street, a few rods below Lafayette, and there he resided until his death, Oct. 15, 1906.

There was a marked improvement in the condition of affairs in Grand Rapids, with the opening of the year 1839. During that year streets were graded, new stores and business houses opened, the east side canal project was pushed rapidly, and evidences multiplied that the town was preparing for a rapid and substantial growth. But the land sales, which began in this year, for the land north of Grand River, should be mentioned as among the events of the year. All the public lands of the Ionia district ready for the market were offered for sale, nine-tenths of them were purchased by actual settlers, and the total sales aggregated a considerable sum. In considering the progress toward an advanced stage of civilization, made by Grand Rapids and the adjacent country prior to 1840, the removal of the Indians was an event, the importance of which should not be overlooked, as it invited immigration and dispelled the fear that was always present of trouble with the red men.

The first church erected in Grand Rapids was built in 1837, on the southwest corner of Monroe and Division avenues. It was built by Louis Campau for the use of St. Andrew's parish, of which the Rev. Andreas Viszoczky was then in charge. The first fire engine was

purchased by the village in 1846. It was a little hand engine of home manufacture, made by William Peaslee. It was tried, with eight or ten men at the brakes, on Monroe avenue, and threw a stream of water over Irving Hall, a three-story brick building. It was kept in service some years.

The first brick building of much size ever built in Grand Rapids was Irving Hall, erected by Samuel B. Ball, in 1843, and it was situated on the west side of Monroe near Pearl street. It was three stories high, and one of its floors was occupied as the first public hall of the town. Its owner, Samuel B. Ball, was a native of Rochester, N. Y., where he was born June 7, 1818. His boyhood and youthful life were passed in or near that place, and he became an active member of the First M. E. Church of Rochester. He married Catherine W. Winn, who after his death became Mrs. A. H. Botsford, and they came to Grand Rapids in the early part of its village period. Here he was for some time engaged as clerk and bookkeeper in the store of his uncle, Daniel Ball, or of Granger & Ball, which occupation he followed until 1844. The brick block which he erected was of the old style, gable roofed, three stories high, with frontage for two stores, and had a hall in the upper story, which, when Irving Lodge No. 11 was organized, was used for its lodge room. He named the building Irving Hall, and by that designation it was familiar to the early settlers. In 1868 it was torn down, and in its place stands the handsome four-story block now occupied by the Boston Store. With a partner, Mr. Ball opened a store in that building in the fall of 1844. Thus he was the pioneer in the erection of brick blocks here, and he also led off in the wholesale trade, but his forecast and ambition went beyond his physical powers of endurance. His health failed before he was thirty years of age, and the people of the embryo city who esteemed him highly had the regretful experience of seeing him droop steadily and surely down to his death, at thirty-two—July 20, 1850. Irving Lodge No. 11, of which he was one of the founders and its first Noble Grand, and also the first deceased of its membership, passed resolutions of sorrow, sympathy and condolence, and the Grand Rapids Enquirer characterized him as an "affectionate, solicitous husband; as a friend always the same; beloved by all acquainted with him."

Daniel Ball, mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, was, beginning in the early village days, a man of tireless activity in many business lines. In trade as a merchant, and in storage and forwarding; in steamboat building and navigation enterprises; in manufacturing; in real estate dealings and improvements, and in banking, he usually kept himself loaded with as much labor and responsibility as three or four ordinary men should carry. He had great tenacity of purpose, as well as energy and industry, and knew no such thing as discouragement so long as his health permitted him to keep upon his feet. He began business in Michigan at Owosso; came here about 1841, and removed to New York in 1863, leaving here many germs of his planting for the great progress which our city has made.

The first bridge joining the east and west sides was built in 1845, and spanned the river at Bridge street. It was built under authority



given to the supervisors of Kent County by act of the Legislature, March 9, 1844. The grant was for "a free bridge," with an appropriation therefor as follows: "That six thousand acres of land be, and the same is, hereby appropriated for the purpose of building said bridge. The said supervisors may select the land and report it to the State Land Commissioner, who shall reserve it for the purpose above stated, and who shall issue certificates therefor \* \* \* after the said bridge shall have been completed, provided it is finished within two years, \* \* \* and provided the amount of the certificates shall not exceed the cost of the bridge." This was a timber and plank bridge, and was built by Eliphalet H. Turner and James Scribner. David Burnett was the master carpenter. It was set upon eight stone piers, each 36x8 feet at the bottom, and 5 feet thick at the top, with ice-breakers up stream. John Harris was the master mason. The piers were eighty-four feet apart, with a stretch of over 100 feet to the east abutment. The superstructure was of the timber-truss pattern most used in those days. There was an enthusiastic celebration upon the laying of the capstone at the west end, when the stone work was completed, Aug. 9, 1845. Lovell Moore delivered an address in which he congratulated the workmen and citizens upon the success achieved, and the fact that the materials required in building the bridge "were all taken from where Nature placed them, within sight." The water in the river at that time was at a lower stage than it had been for seven years. The bridge was finished November 27, and Rev. Francis H. Cuming was the first to drive across it. At the same time the bridge across the canal was finished.

David Burnett, who was the master carpenter in the building of the first bridge at Grand Rapids, was born in South Hadley, Mass., Sept. 14, 1808, and came to Michigan in 1836. For more than thirty years he was one of the prominent and active business mechanics of this place. He was not only the foreman in the building of this first bridge, but he built the second and third bridges at the same place on the same piers, all now superseded by a substantial iron one. Among other structures erected by him was the bridge across Grand River at Lyons, which he constructed in 1837. He rebuilt the same in 1843, and received in part payment 2,000 acres of State improvement land. He erected the log tavern known as the "Fisk" or "Lake House," in the winter of 1837. In 1838 and 1839, in company with Nathaniel Fisk and Jacob Rogers, of Milwaukee, he built six lighthouses on Lake Michigan. He built the bridge at Ionia in 1847; the stone Union School House, in 1849; the first dam in this city the same year; the bridge at Plainfield, in 1850; the dam at Newaygo, in 1853; the dam at Rogers' Ferry, on the Muskegon, in 1864, and the bridge at Bridgeton, in 1866; the bridges on forty miles of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, in 1868; and the bridge at Big Rapids in 1870, besides other dams and bridges. During his business career he always had some prominent job of building on hand, either in the city or the country about, and was in the front rank among the energetic master builders of this region. He was a thoroughly upright citizen, plain of speech, reliable always, kind and obliging, and one highly esteemed by the entire community. He died in 1875.







VIEW IN 1872 OF WHAT IS NOW CAMPAU SQUARE



## GRAND RAPIDS AS A CITY.

The formative period of Grand Rapids' history has now been treated of, and comprises the period extending from 1833 to 1850. With the exception of Louis Campau, who made his home on the east side of the Grand River in 1826, and a trader or two like Marsac, there were no white settlers until the summer of 1833, when the first Anglo-Saxons made their appearance. All sections of the village increased rapidly in population and wealth during the ensuing seventeen years, and the need of a more complete organization came to be felt. The little settlement of 1834 and 1835 had increased until in 1845 the population of Grand Rapids township was given as 1,510, and in 1850, the population of the village was 2,686. Naturally the question of a city organization came to be agitated, and on May 1, 1850, an election was held which resulted in a decisive vote in favor of a new charter. The majority in favor of the charter was 163. The life of Grand Rapids as a village covered in all a period of twelve years, beginning in 1838 and ending in 1850. Henry C. Smith was the first president of the village, and the last to hold that office was George Coggeshall. Other pioneers who officiated in that capacity were John Almy and William Peaslee. In the list of village trustees appear the names of such men as Louis Campau, Richard Godfroy, William A. Richmond, Charles I. Walker, George Coggeshall, James Watson, John Almy, Henry P. Bridge, Francis J. Higginson, William G. Henry, Henry C. Smith, Antoine Campau, Charles Shepard, James M. Nelson, Josiah L. Wheeler, Samuel F. Perkins, Israel V. Harris, Harvey K. Rose, Samuel F. Butler, Lucius Lyon, Daniel Ball, and others who achieved distinction in later years. The most of these gentlemen have been given extended personal mention on other pages of this work in connection with the history of lines of endeavor in which they became prominent. George Coggeshall was one of the comers of 1836, and at an early day a justice of the peace. He built a dwelling house on the corner of Bond and Michigan streets, east of the Bridge Street House, and there he lived until 1861. He was a man of mark in the early days, plain, direct, and blunt in speech, and always meaning just what he said. During many years he was the attorney and manager of the Lucius Lyon interests in what was called the Kent Plat.

William A. Richmond was for more than thirty years prominent in the development and building up of Grand Rapids, and was identified not only with local, but also State history. New York was his native State, the first eighteen years of his life being passed in the village of Aurora, on the banks of Cayuga Lake, where he was born in 1808. The academy furnished the foundation of a good education, supplemented by mercantile experience in Geneseo, Moravia and New York City, and by association with leading men of affairs and prominent politicians. Mr. Richmond was among the hundreds of young men who emigrated to the Territory of Michigan in 1836. Two previous prospecting trips had acquainted him somewhat with the country; the fame of the Grand River Valley was attractive, and he easily decided to locate at the thriving little trading post of Grand Rapids. Bostonians, Vermonters, New Yorkers, and Philadelphians had preceded him, making, with the French pioneers, a little community of



about two hundred people. Later he was urged by friends to go further west, to a town on Lake Michigan known as Chicago; but a visit to that point failed to convince him of its advantages over Grand Rapids. In 1837 he married a daughter of Abel Page, a settler from Rutland, Vt., and from that time during his life Mr. Richmond contributed steadily and influentially to the growth and progress of the place which he had selected for his home. In connection with Judge Carroll, Judge Almy, and the Hon. Lucius Lyon, he purchased an interest in the "Kent Plat." He was a member of the first board of village trustees and cashier of the first bank at this place. The construction of the first lattice bridge across Grand River was accomplished largely by his efforts, and he was president of the company which owned it; he was one of the projectors of the plank road to Kalamazoo—one advance from the corduroy—and afterward of a railroad to the same place. He was also among those enterprising men who rendered hand lanterns unnecessary on the city streets, by the erection of gas works. He was active in advancing the interests of education and religion; contributed largely toward the erection of several churches, and in the effort to establish St. Mark's College, and was for many years a vestryman in St. Mark's (Episcopal) Church. Mr. Richmond was frequently chosen by his townsmen to represent them in governmental affairs. In 1836 he acted as a delegate from the district comprising the counties of Kent, Ionia, and Clinton, to the first "Convention of Assent," as it was called, which rejected the conditions proposed by Congress for the admission of Michigan to the Union; and at the sessions of 1844 and 1845 he served in the State Legislature. His father having been a prominent Democratic Congressman from New York, Mr. Richmond came naturally into acquaintance and friendship with Gen. Lewis Cass, Territorial Governor of Michigan, and with Stevens T. Mason, the first State Governor, through whom he received several State appointments. He was one of the commissioners who located the State prison at Jackson; was receiver of the United States land office at Ionia; was for several years a most successful Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Michigan and a part of Wisconsin; and was twice commissioned brigadier-general of the State militia. In the discharge of official duties he made a record for efficiency and faithfulness; and in the relation of citizen his enterprise, public spirit and sound judgment gave him high rank among the pioneers who shaped the character and destiny of the Valley City. Mr. Richmond died in 1870, at the age of sixty-two years.

William G. Henry came to Grand Rapids in 1836, was the second village treasurer, a merchant, a druggist, and an enterprising citizen. He moved to Detroit about 1865.

James M. Nelson, born in Milford, Mass., Nov. 27, 1810, came here in 1836, and the place was his home during life, about fifty years. His first business was in a store opposite the Eagle Hotel. Afterward he was engaged quite extensively in lumbering. With H. P. Bridge he built the first saw-mill on the canal. His brother, George C. Nelson, was his partner until 1845, and together they built, in 1837, a saw-mill on Mill Creek, a few miles north of the rapids and west of the river, the first mill in that region. In the winter of 1837-38, when



provisions were scarce, James M. Nelson went to Indiana in search of hogs, purchased 280, and drove them home, where they were gladly received by the very hungry people. Near the same time he started with five others to explore the Muskegon River region. The snow was deep, and they were gone several days, lost their way, and were thirty-six hours without food before reaching home. Mr. Nelson was among the first to raft lumber down Grand River. From 1841 he served as postmaster for one term. About 1859 he went out of the lumbering business and engaged in flouring. Four years later, he again changed his business, buying with his brother, Ezra T. Nelson, a half interest in the Comstock furniture factory, and he operated as a manufacturer during the remainder of his life. Mr. Nelson was a strictly and thoroughly honest man, one of the "representative self-made men" of this place, who, by his enterprise, integrity and industry commanded the esteem of this community wherein the greater part of his life was spent. He was a member of the St. Mark's Episcopal Church and influential in its councils until his death, which occurred in 1883. George C. Nelson continued in business on Monroe street until 1890, when he removed to Brooklyn, N. Y.

Samuel F. Perkins came here in 1836 and engaged in the shoe and leather business. He operated a tannery and was for some time in trade on what is now Bond avenue, and afterward with William Woodward on Monroe street. Samuel F. Butler was one of the early cabinetmakers here, residing first on what is now Bond avenue, afterward on the old Canal street, north of the present Michigan street, a highly respected citizen. He suddenly dropped dead, April 3, 1856, as he was passing through the front gate to his residence. Abel Page came in 1836 and engaged here in agriculture and horticulture. He planted the first nursery of any pretensions in this valley, and for years supplied settlers with grafted fruits and rare plants. He was an honest and very pleasant gentleman, and prominent in the establishment of the Congregational Church here. The closing years of his life were spent in a pretty suburban home near the north line of the city on the Plainfield road.

The first election under the city charter was held May 11, 1850. Henry R. Williams received the honor of being elected the first mayor of the city, and the other officers elected in 1850 were as follows: Aldermen—First ward, Amos Roberts; Second ward, Charles W. Taylor; Third ward, Lowell Moore; Fourth ward, Joseph Penney; Fifth ward, Isaac Turner. Aaron B. Turner was elected clerk; Erastus Hall, city treasurer; Leonard Bement, recorder; Alfred Y. Cary, city marshal, and Wright L. Coffinbury, surveyor.

One of the moving spirits here, from 1841 to 1853, was Henry R. Williams, who, like Daniel Ball, laid well some of the foundations of material growth and the general weal. He came here from Rochester, N. Y. His aspirations were far-reaching, and his will to work in public and private enterprises was curbed only by the limits of his bodily strength. He was a popular and much loved citizen and it was but appropriate that he should be chosen as the first mayor of Grand Rapids. His mind wore out his physical machinery, and his life went out at the very flower of his manhood, July 19, 1853, at the age of forty-three years. He was conspicuous in the development of steam-boating on Grand River.



Amos Roberts was a prominent early merchant in the vicinity of what is now called Campau Place. He was born in Litchfield, Conn., in 1786, and in 1809 was married to Sallie Hurd, at Middle Haddam, in the same State. In 1838 he came to Grand Rapids and established a general assortment store, into which he took his son, William D. Roberts, in 1839, as a partner, and the business was conducted under the firm name of A. Roberts & Son during both their lives. In 1843-44 Amos Roberts and A. W. Pike built the stone store building called Commercial Block, which stood at the foot of the then Monroe street abutting into what is now Campau Place for nearly a third of its area, until that thoroughfare was straightened through, in 1873. Colonel Roberts, as he was familiarly called, was a man of fine presence and business ability, and had steady and uniform success as a merchant. He was a member of St. Mark's Church, and at his death in 1873 was buried with Masonic honors. His residence for some thirty years was where the Grand Rapids Trust Company building stands, corner of Fountain and Ottawa streets.

Leonard Bement for more than thirty years was a prominent member of the Grand Rapids bar, and a most worthy citizen. Neither dashing nor brilliant, he was industrious, faithful in his work, tender and gentle in feeling, with a sense of right and a knowledge of the law which made him a good judge and a useful justice of the peace. Alfred X. Cary was engaged in trade on Monroe street as early as 1843, and he was a well-known and respected citizen and business man until his death in 1882. He was a merchant, hotel landlord, steamboat captain, flouring mills manager, and was recognized as an honorable servant of the public in various official positions.

As a comparison between the original and the present territory of the city, we insert here the boundaries as they were in 1850. The incorporating act or charter begins as follows:

"An Act to incorporate the city of Grand Rapids:

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, That so much of the townships of Grand Rapids and Walker, in the county of Kent, as is contained in the following limits, to-wit: sections nineteen and thirty, in surveyed town number seven north of range eleven west, and sections number twenty-four and twenty-five, in surveyed town number seven north of range number twelve west, including so much of Grand River as runs through and adjoining said sections, with the islands in the same, shall be and the same is hereby declared to be a city, by the name and style of the city of Grand Rapids; and all the freemen of said city, from time to time, being inhabitants thereof, shall be and continue to be a body corporate and politic, by the name of the mayor, recorder, alderman and freemen of the city of Grand Rapids; and by that name they and their successors shall be known in law, and shall be and are hereby made capable of suing and being sued, of pleading and being impleaded, of answering and being answered unto, and of defending and being defended in all courts of record, and any other place whatsoever; and may have a common seal, and may change and alter the same at their pleasure; and by the same name shall be and are hereby made capable of purchasing, holding, conveying and disposing of any real and personal estate for the use of said corporation, as hereinafter provided."



The city was divided into five wards, the first of which comprised all the territory south of Lyon street and west of the continuous line of Division street, and east of Grand River; the second all north of Lyon street and west of that part of Division street north of its intersecting Bridge street, and all north of Bridge street and east of Grand River; the third all south of Bridge street and east of Division street and the continuous line thereof; the fourth, loosely speaking, included all of the west side north of Bridge street, and the fifth embraced the entire west side south of Bridge street. The charter provided for annual elections, to be held on the first Monday of April in each year, at which the officers to be elected were a mayor, a recorder, five aldermen (one from each ward), a clerk, treasurer, marshal, five assessors (one in each ward), city surveyor, four justices of the peace, and not less than three nor more than five constables, a solicitor, two school inspectors, and two directors of the poor. The term of office was one year in all cases except that of school inspector, and these officers were to serve for two years. The president and trustees of the village of Grand Rapids were to determine the result of the first election under the new charter, and subsequent elections were to be determined by the mayor and common council. The mayor was made the chief executive officer, and the head of the police of the city, and it was many years before a separate police department was found necessary. The mayor, recorder and aldermen, or any three of them, the mayor or recorder always being one, were given full power and authority to hold and keep a court of record, by the name, style and title of the "Mayor's Court of the City of Grand Rapids"; and this court was vested with exclusive jurisdiction to hear all complaints and conduct all examinations and trials in criminal cases within the city, and with exclusive jurisdiction of all cases in which the city might be a party.

Power was conferred on the mayor, recorder and aldermen to remove at pleasure any of the officers by them appointed, and to fill all vacancies that might happen in any of said offices, so often as the same might occur by death, resignation, removal or other cause. The common council was also given authority to remove the marshal, recorder or clerk of the city, for any violation by either of them of any of the provisions of the charter, or of any lawful by-laws or ordinances of the city; and on such removal the common council was also given power to appoint another person to fill such vacancy, for the unexpired portion of the year.

The most general grant of power was contained in the following section:

"The common council shall have full power and authority to organize, maintain and regulate the police of the city; to pass all by-laws and ordinances for that purpose, and relative to the duties and powers and fees of the marshal as marshal, and as collector and street commissioner, city surveyor, solicitor, treasurer, clerk and constables or other officers of said city, except as hereinafter provided; relative to the time and manner of working upon the streets, lanes and alleys of said city; relative to the manner of grading, railing, planking and paving all sidewalks in said city, and to setting posts and shade trees in all streets, lanes and alleys in said city; relative



to the manner of assessing, levying and collecting all highway and other taxes in said city, except as hereinafter provided." Then follows an enumeration of a large number of subjects over which it was intended the powers of the common council should extend. In every modification or revision of the city charter down to the establishing of the commission form of government this general grant of legislative power to the common council was retained, but the enumeration of subjects intended to be covered by it was extended as attention was called to various evils or abuses which seemed to require especial attention in the course of the growth of the city in territory and population. Summarized as concisely as possible, the original list included the license and regulation of all ale and porter shops and places of resort where spirituous liquors are sold or used within the city; and of shows, circuses and theatrical performances; the restraint and prohibition of gaming of all descriptions; the prevention of riots and disorderly assemblages; the suppression and restraint of disorderly houses, shows, and exhibitions; the abatement and regulation of trades and places which, though lawful in themselves, might be dangerous, unwholesome, or offensive in a city; the prevention of improper incumbrances of streets, alleys, and sidewalks, and of rapid driving in the streets; prohibition of cattle, swine, sheep, poultry, geese and dogs running at large; the establishment of public pumps, wells, cisterns, and water-works; the establishment of a board of health, hospitals, and cemeteries; the purchase of fire engines and fire buckets and the establishment of fire limits; the regulation of wharves, bridges, mill-races, and canals, and of exhibitions of fireworks and shooting of firearms or crackers; the restraint of public drunkenness and obscenity, and the punishment of persons guilty thereof; the regulation of the police officers and the appointment of watchmen and firemen, and the making and enforcing of rules for their government; compelling the removal by the owner or occupant of buildings or grounds, from sidewalks, streets, and alleys, of snow, dirt and rubbish, and, from any part of his premises, of all such substances as the board of health should direct.

The common council had power to lay out and vacate, to regulate, pave, and improve, extend and widen streets and alleys, paying damages to be assessed by twelve free-holders. The council was authorized to levy, annually, for general purposes, on all property, real and personal, not exceeding two mills on the dollar of its assessed value. The assessment roll for each ward was to be made out by the assessor of the ward, and returned by him to the clerk of the city, who was to lay it before the common council. That body was to consider, revise, and equalize the assessments, after which the taxes were to be levied. The tax upon real estate, which constituted the great bulk of the whole, was enforced by public sales of the several parcels thereof by the common council, after four weeks' public notice, from which sale the owner might redeem within one year on paying the amount of tax, costs and charges, with interest at twelve per cent. per annum. The tax was a lien on the land, charged from the time of levy of the tax. Personal property was placed in a separate part of the tax list, and the tax thereon was collected by seizure and sale at auction.



Fire engine, hook and ladder, and hose companies were provided for, each to be composed of not more than fifty able-bodied men, officered and governed in accordance with their own by-laws. Membership was to be voluntary and gratuitous; the only rewards being freedom from highway labor and military duty. The council was authorized to impose penalties for violations of ordinance in the shape of fines, not exceeding one hundred dollars in any one case; and in default of payment might authorize imprisonment in the county jail not more than six months.

The above is a summary of the original charter of the city of Grand Rapids, stated as briefly as possible. It was amended in 1851, repealing a provision which made the mayor a supervisor, and providing for the election of two supervisors annually, one for each side of the river. Other changes were made from time to time, and in 1857 a substantially new charter was passed by the Legislature, under the title of "An act to revise the charter of the city of Grand Rapids." This new charter enlarged the boundaries of the city somewhat, without increasing the number of wards. The elective officers were mayor, recorder, treasurer, controller, clerk, and marshal, elected from the city at large, and from each ward two aldermen (one of the aldermen to be supervisor of the ward), one constable, a justice of the peace, two school inspectors and two directors of the poor. The term of office of the recorder was extended to two years. The terms of the other offices were to be annual, excepting aldermen, which, after the first election, the term was to be two years and one elected each year. The justices of the peace were to hold office for four years, and the recorder and comptroller were to be elected for two years. The qualifications for suffrage limited to "the inhabitants of the said city being electors under the constitution of the State of Michigan, and no others." The recorder was authorized to preside at the meetings of the common council in case of the absence of the mayor, and in case of the absence of both mayor and recorder the council could select one of their number to preside. The duties of the city attorney, treasurer, and clerk were defined; and the office of city comptroller was created, the incumbent to be the financial officer of the city and to keep a careful oversight of all contracts entered into for public improvements. The council was to have the general control of the public funds; but its authority was limited by provisions intended as a safeguard against extravagance in expenditures and in taxation. The council was authorized to issue bonds, in certain limitations and for general city or ward purposes. Taxes might be levied as follows: A general city tax on all property subject to taxation, not exceeding one-half of one per cent. on the valuation of such real and personal estate within the limits of the city. The aldermen were made street commissioners with authority within the city limits to direct the grading of streets and the construction of sewers, wharves and alleys.

In 1863, by amendment, provision was made for requiring owners or occupants of lots in the city to lay or repair the walks in front of their premises, or in default it should be done at the expense of the city, and the cost added to the general tax against the lots or houses adjacent, and collected therewith; and in 1865, further provision was made in relation to the return of uncollected taxes, and the sale of



property to satisfy them. An amendment to the charter, approved March 13, 1867, made provision for the removal by the council of appointed officers, for malfeasance or misfeasance in office, but allowing the accused an opportunity to be heard in defense. Another amendment, in 1869, contained further provisions in relation to the proceedings on sale of property for assessments and taxes. By a revision of the charter, in March, 1871, the number of wards in the city was increased from five to eight. This act was further amended by acts approved in 1875, 1877, 1879, and 1881. By an amendment approved March 17, 1872, a change was made in the boundary between the fourth and fifth wards, making Fairbanks street the line. The act to authorize a Board of Public Works was passed March 22, 1873, and was thereafter several times amended. The act constituting the Superior Court was passed March 24, 1875. An act to organize and establish a Police Court was passed in April, 1873, and this was superseded by another, passed in May, 1879. The Board of Police and Fire Commissioners was established by act of May 24, 1881. An act approved May 18, 1883 provided for the management of cemeteries owned or to be owned by the city. Some important amendments to the charter were made in the Spring of 1887, and also in succeeding years, until in May, 1917, when a change was made from the Federal or Aldermanic form of government to the Commission plan with a City Manager.

The following is a list of all those who held the office of mayor of the city from the time of its incorporation, in 1850, until the adoption of the Commission form of government, in 1917, the year given being the time of the election of each, and the term of service extending to the year given as the time of the election of his successor: 1850, Henry R. Williams; 1851, Ralph W. Cole; 1852, William H. Withey; 1853, Thomas B. Church; 1854, Wilder D. Foster; 1855, Charles Shepard; 1856, John M. Fox; 1857, William T. Powers; 1858, Gilbert M. McCray; 1859, George K. Johnson; 1860, Martin L. Sweet; 1861, George H. White; 1863, Charles C. Comstock; 1865, Wilder D. Foster; 1867, John W. Champlin; 1868, Moses V. Aldrich; 1871, Leonard H. Randall; 1872, Julius Houseman; 1873, Peter R. L. Peirce; 1874, Julius Houseman; 1875, Peter R. L. Peirce; 1877, George W. Thayer; 1878, Henry S. Smith; 1879, Francis Letellier; 1880, Henry S. Smith; 1881, George G. Steketee; 1882, Edmund B. Dikeman; 1883, Crawford Angell; 1884, Charles E. Belknap; 1885, John L. Curtiss; 1886, Edmund B. Dikeman; 1888, Isaac M. Weston; 1889, John Killean; 1890, E. F. Uhl; 1892, William J. Stuart; 1894, E. B. Fisher; 1895, Charles D. Stebbins; 1896, Lathrop C. Stow; 1898, George R. Perry; 1902, W. Millard Palmer; 1904, Edwin F. Sweet; 1906, George E. Ellis; 1916, George P. Tilma. Many of these gentlemen have been given appropriate mention on other pages of this work, and Messrs. Letellier, Steketee, Belknap, Fisher, Stow, Perry, Palmer, Sweet, Ellis, and Tilma are living.

William H. Withey came from Vermont and built a saw-mill some miles above the rapids in 1837-38, and for twenty-eight years was prominent in business enterprises, including staging to Battle Creek and Kalamazoo, and constructing the Kalamazoo & Grand Rapids plank road.



John M. Fox, who came into the valley in 1837, and after 1846 resided many years in Grand Rapids, was well known and respected as a citizen, business man and a public officer. During the last ten years of his life he resided at Lowell, where he died, Jan. 4, 1873, aged 62 years.

Gilbert M. McCray was born at Skaneateles, N. Y., May 13, 1826; at twelve years of age came with his parents to Grandville, Mich., and in 1843 came to Grand Rapids. He was bred to the trade of machinist, in which he became an expert and a master workman. In company with Stewart B. McCray and H. Gaylord, about 1855, he built a foundry and machine shop on Market street, below the Eagle Hotel. After operating this shop a few years, he was, during most of the time for nearly thirty years, foreman in the Grand Rapids Iron Works. In 1858 he was mayor of Grand Rapids.

Moses V. Aldrich, prominent for nearly a quarter of a century in the business circles of Grand Rapids, was born at Macedon, Ontario County, New York, Sept. 13, 1829. His education was only such as could be obtained at the common schools of his boyhood days. His father, Stephen H. Aldrich, moved to Michigan in 1836. Soon afterward Moses was in the employ of a railroad company, working faithfully to earn his own subsistence and to contribute to that of his father's family. A few years later he entered a dry goods store at Plymouth, Mich., as a clerk. While still a youth he attracted all who knew him by his affability, his obliging disposition, and his strict integrity. About 1852 he was promoted to partnership in the firm of J. S. Scattergood & Company, a fact which amply testifies to the confidence and esteem of his employers. Glancing at this beginning and through his uniformly successful career, the fact becomes apparent that Mr. Aldrich was essentially a self-made man. In 1855 he disposed of his business at Plymouth and came to Grand Rapids, entering into partnership with his wife's father, William B. Ledyard, in the manufacture of fanning mills and milk safes. This business grew to large proportions, and its products supplied the market in a large part of Michigan and Wisconsin. Mr. Aldrich was active manager of the concern, and pushed it with extraordinary vigor and success. In 1860 was organized the banking house of Ledyard & Aldrich, in which Mr. Aldrich continued as a partner until 1862. In February, 1871, he opened a private banking house and continued in this business until his death. After his death this enterprise was merged in the Grand Rapids National Bank, by reorganization. Mr. Aldrich's intuitive judgment of men and affairs, his thorough integrity, and his fine executive ability, commanded public attention, and he was chosen mayor of the city for three consecutive terms, in 1868-69-70. He had a habit of close watchfulness, as untiring in public as in private affairs, and he won general commendation in his official acts. From 1875 until his death he served as County Superintendent of the Poor, an office accepted purely out of kindness of heart to the unfortunate and suffering. The county infirmary may be rightly called his crowning charity. When asked why he should give his valuable time so persistently to this distasteful work, he replied that it was to satisfy himself that abuse should not be added to the ills already visited on the helpless and imbecile inmates of this institution. Mr. Aldrich was



stern in justice. It was one of the pleasures of his life to give advice and assistance to young men of spirit and ambition. He had been poor himself, he said, and he knew how hard was the struggle. On the other hand, he had small patience with the shiftless poor, refusing aid to such except in cases of destitution. Though a stanch Republican, Mr. Aldrich was not ambitious politically. Such offices of local trust as he was persuaded to hold were accepted for the public good and not for personal aggrandizement. He loved the place which he had chosen for his home, and he entered into all its enterprises with indefatigable and fearless zeal. The prosperity of Grand Rapids today is a fitting tribute to the sound judgment and untiring energy of her pioneers, her early "city fathers." On the list of these the name of Moses V. Aldrich will ever have a foremost stand. The pathos of an early death accrued to him. He was cut down in the prime of his manly success, at the age of only fifty years. He died Dec. 8, 1879.

Peter R. L. Peirce was a prominent citizen of Grand Rapids for upward of a quarter of a century. He was born at Geneseo, N. Y., May 25, 1821, and was a son of Col. John Peirce, who moved from Virginia to Western New York about the time of the War of 1812. From Geneseo, in 1836, Peter removed to Detroit, where for a time he read law, and thence, in 1840; he came to Grand Rapids. Here he again studied law in the office of George Martin, who afterward became chief justice of the State Supreme court, meantime keeping a book store, and was one of the active members of the Grand Rapids Lyceum, the debating club of that period. In 1843 he removed to Cincinnati and engaged in mercantile trade. While there he became interested in temperance movements, and wrote a history of the Order of the Sons of Temperance in Ohio, of which 100,000 copies were published and circulated. He also contributed many articles to the newspapers of that city, and formed a habit of writing for the newspaper press, which he kept up through life; his productions in that line being always sprightly and readable as well as useful. From Cincinnati Mr. Peirce returned to Grand Rapids, in 1850, and followed mercantile business some five years. He had the eye and the taste of an artist, with talent in architectural draughting; in which he indulged from time to time; and many residences and other buildings, some of them yet standing, were erected from plans of his design and drawing. In each of the years 1853-54-55 he was chosen city clerk, serving three terms. In 1854 he was elected clerk of Kent County, and was re-elected to the same office until he served seven consecutive terms, running through fourteen years. In that position he won universal commendation, and was called the model county clerk of the State. As an officer he was methodical, expert, prompt and exact in his records and in the details of the public business. He was chosen to the State Senate for the term of 1869-70, and there his services were indefatigable and efficient, to the great benefit of the cause of education; he being chairman of the Committee on Education, and influential in procuring the passage of the act abolishing the rate bill and making the common schools free; also successful in urging liberal appropriations for the State University. Mr. Peirce was elected mayor of Grand Rapids in 1873 and also in each of the



years 1875 and 1876. From about 1870 for some six years he was connected with the land department of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company, and compiled a historic and descriptive map of the country comprising its land grant, which was widely circulated, at home and in Europe. On March 19, 1877, he was appointed post-master at Grand Rapids, which office he held at the time of his death. Through all his life Mr. Peirce was an active, industrious, public-spirited citizen, and in social circles remarkable for his cheerful, lively and happy disposition and mirthful mind, which made him a welcome guest at all gatherings. During the war for the Union he was active among the foremost in promoting enlistments, and generously alive in aiding needy families of the gallant men who went to the front, giving liberally of his own means in numerous instances. He was very popular with the soldiers and worked in their interests at all times. He was popular as a lecturer, and as a speaker at public gatherings, and it was said of him that for eighteen consecutive years he delivered an address at some Fourth of July celebration. His happy manner of spicing with wit and anecdote and humor his fervid patriotism, earnest appeal and instruction, always insured him a large and well-pleased audience. In religious sentiment Mr. Peirce was an Episcopalian of liberal views; was a member of that denomination after 1843, and a vestryman of St. Mark's Church in Grand Rapids for eighteen years. In its behalf he manifested a zealous interest, and managed many trusts with scrupulous fidelity. Politically, from its organization, he was an active, earnest and enthusiastic adherent of the Republican party. Mr. Peirce died at his home, Nov. 12, 1878, and a personal friend said of him: "Few in their lives had more or warmer friends than he, and few or none are more sincerely mourned when the death summons comes." He was a member of the Bar of Kent County, but never entered into general practice as an attorney. As a citizen and as a public officer, Peter R. L. Peirce was a man of spotless integrity. His life was one of influence and usefulness.

George W. Thayer was born in Burlington, Vt., Sept. 27, 1827. He remained in Vermont until nearly eighteen years of age, and, like most of the youth of his generation, struggled heroically for an education and made the most of his opportunities in the schools and academy at Johnson and at Burlington in the Green Mountain State. In May, 1845, at the suggestion of his uncle, the Hon. Lucius Lyon, one of Michigan's earliest and most honored representatives in the United States Senate, then Surveyor-General northwest of the Ohio for the United States government, he came to Grand Rapids, remaining until August of that year, when he was called to Detroit to join a party formed by his uncle for the purpose of making some explorations in the upper peninsula of Michigan, then a veritable wilderness, in a portion of which, Dr. Douglass Houghton, the noted geologist, was then making a linear, topographical and geological survey, of that region which has since become so vastly important to the whole country in its mineral and other wealth. The party coasted in an open boat from Sault St. Marie to Copper Harbor, at which point Dr. Houghton and party were intercepted, and where, pursuant to a previous understanding, Mr. Thayer left his uncle's party to join that of Dr. Houghton on the public surveys, his purpose at that time being to



fit himself, under the instructions of Dr. Houghton, for the profession of surveyor and engineer. The untimely death of his patron, by drowning, in October of that year, changed his plans. Upon his return to Detroit after the expedition, he accepted a subordinate position in his uncle's office, and by merit won promotion until he was chief clerk in that most important Government office, and had the fullest confidence and esteem, not only of the Surveyor-General and the Interior Department of the Government, but also of the large force of his subordinates in the office. He had become attached to Michigan, and when, in 1856, the office of Surveyor-General northwest of the Ohio was removed from Detroit to St. Paul, he resigned his position after three months service to organize the new office, rather than leave the State. He engaged in business in Detroit for a time, but in 1861 came to Grand Rapids to find a permanent home, for his uncle had had great faith in this city, having considerable investments here, and a number of his relatives already lived here. On coming here he engaged in trade, retail and jobbing, as a grocer, and devoted his energies to his business until he retired, in 1888, from mercantile life. He served the city at one time, in 1864-65, as its clerk. In the municipal year, 1877-78, he was mayor of the city. In 1879 he was appointed a member of the Board of Public Works of the city and served in that most important executive committee for nine successive years—longer than any one else ever had up to that period—and nearly all that time was president of the board. He was chosen the first president of the Western Michigan Agricultural and Industrial Society, when that association was organized, in April, 1879, and held the office continuously for five successive years, until he felt constrained to insist that he had given his share of energy and time to the society, and refused a re-election; but after a rest of six years he was compelled to resume his relations with those most important interests, having been again unanimously chosen president in 1890—a sufficient commentary on his great worth to the public in that position. He was for several years manager of the first street railroad enterprise in this city, and proved that good business methods achieve success and serve the public well in that sort of relation. He also served as president of the North Park Street Railway, one of the early suburban lines. Mr. Thayer died Sept. 2, 1916.

Henry S. Smith was born in Litchfield, Herkimer County, New York, Nov. 11, 1820. While he was yet a lad, his father, Solomon Smith, purchased a farm and removed the family to Cassville, Oneida County, New York, and there passed the remainder of his life. Henry received only the limited educational advantages afforded by the public school. There he spent the years of his youth and early manhood, engaging successfully in several small enterprises, and finally became the owner of the homestead farm. For several years Mr. Smith held the office of the justice of the peace, in which his solid judgment and firm sense of justice established for him an enviable reputation. He was also captain in the New York State militia. In 1858 he came to Michigan and settled in Grand Rapids. Here he began a business career in which he became prominent by the purchase of the Bremer ashery, which he managed but a short time, when he engaged in the manufacture of saleratus. A few years later he began the manufac-



ture of wooden ware and agricultural implements, and became an extensive jobber in the products of other manufacturers. He was among the first to send out traveling agents from this city for the sale of its wares, and soon his firm and its manufactures became well known throughout the West. In the spring of 1878, as the candidate of the National Greenback party, he was elected mayor, and was again elected in 1880. In 1878 he was also the candidate of the same party for Governor, and, though defeated, ran well with his ticket, receiving 73,313 votes. Mr. Smith died Dec. 11, 1881.

Crawford Angell was born in Massachusetts, April 2, 1827. His father was engaged in general business and removed his family to Rhode Island about 1830. There Mr. Angell remained until the age of 18 years, and in October, 1845, came to Grand Rapids and attended school at the academy, then being conducted in the court house, which stood in what is now known as Fulton Street Park. He was in school two years, doing chores to pay his board, and then entered the National Hotel as clerk. He remained thus employed until 1853, when he entered the office of the American Express Company as porter. He became familiar with the details of the business, and in 1855 was appointed agent for Grand Rapids, a position which included the duties of stage agent of the Grand Rapids & Kalamazoo line. In May, 1880, he was made assistant superintendent of the American Express Company, Michigan division, comprising Michigan and a portion of Indiana and Ohio. In 1878 and 1879 Mr. Angell was treasurer of the city of Grand Rapids, elected on the National ticket. He was one of the organizers of the National party, and under his leadership it achieved notable local success.

John L. Curtiss was born in Windham County, Connecticut, Aug. 7, 1835. When eleven years of age he accompanied his parents to Ontario County, New York, where he remained until he had reached his majority. He graduated at Lima College, in New York State, in 1854, and when twenty-one years old went to Dexter, Washtenaw County, Michigan, where for two years he was engaged in the mill and hardware business. He taught school three winters in New York and three winters in Michigan. In the fall of 1859 he went to Milwaukee, Wis., and was employed as a dry goods clerk for five years. At the end of that time he went to Chicago and was in the employ of Armstrong & Company, wholesale oil dealers, as traveling salesman for five years. In the spring of 1870 he came to Grand Rapids, and in connection with James M. Hansel established a wholesale paper and oil business on Front street on the west side of the river, where they remained nearly two years. Mr. Curtiss subsequently purchased his partner's interest and sold it to Lewis G. Dunton. The stock was removed to 69 old Canal street, but increasing business soon necessitated more commodious quarters, and in the fall of 1880 a location on Lyon street was occupied. In the fall of 1884 Mr. Curtiss was elected to the State Senate, and in the following spring was elected mayor of the city of Grand Rapids.

Isaac M. Weston was born April 20, 1845, at North Anson, Me., and removed to Milwaukee, Wis., in 1859. In 1862 he was engaged in the Little Crow Indian campaign, as a lieutenant in a Minnesota regiment. In 1863 he entered the University of Michigan, at Ann



Arbor, and spent two years in that institution. In 1865 he entered the employ of the United States government as military storekeeper at Fort Laramie, Dak., and the year following was managing editor of the Salt Lake (Utah) Daily Vedette. In 1867 he embarked in the lumber business at Whitehall, Mich., and at Milwaukee, associated with his father. In 1877 he became cashier of the First National Bank at Whitehall, of which institution his father was president, and in September, 1879, on the retirement of the latter from active business life, the son succeeded to his position. In January, 1881, he accepted the position of cashier of the Farmers & Mechanics' Bank at Grand Rapids. At the same time he was also at the head of two lumber and saw-mill firms at Whitehall, and had pine land interests on the Muskegon and Manistee Rivers. He served as a member of the Democratic State Central Committee for the Fifth Congressional district, and in 1880 was the Democratic candidate for State Treasurer. For six years he was a member of the Executive Committee, and treasurer four years, until 1886, when he was made chairman, and re-elected for another two years, in 1888. For six months previous to May 6, 1888, Mr. Weston was also acting member of the Democratic National Committee for Michigan, under a proxy from Postmaster-General Dickinson. During the campaign of 1888 he was president of the Democratic Association of the Northwest, which included all the Northwestern State chairmen. He served two years as treasurer of the Grand Rapids Board of Education, and four years on the Board of Police and Fire Commissioners, the last year as president. In 1882 Mr. Weston was a member and treasurer of the Congressional committee of the Fifth district, when the democrats elected their candidate for the first time in twenty-six years. In 1884 the Democratic delegates to the Fifth district, joint Democratic-Greenback Congressional convention, presented Mr. Weston's name for the nomination, and under a three-fourths rule he polled over two-thirds of the votes for sixty-five ballots, but his being president of one national bank and vice-president of another, created Greenback opposition, and he insisted on his name being dropped. In April, 1888, he was elected mayor of Grand Rapids. The same year the state convention of his party elected him first delegate-at-large to the St. Louis national convention, which renominated President Cleveland. One of the last official acts of President Cleveland in his first term was the appointment of Mr. Weston as government commissioner to examine for acceptance the last section of the Southern Pacific Company's railroad, between San Francisco and Portland, Ore.

John Killean was born at Buffalo, N. Y., Nov. 27, 1831. While he was quite young his father moved out of the city and settled on a farm in the town of Hamburg, Erie County, New York. Mr. Killean's early educational privileges were those of attendance at a district school during the winter months until he was sixteen years old. At the age of twenty-three, Feb. 18, 1855, he married, in the city of Buffalo, Mary C. Walsh. He was thereafter mostly engaged in the lumber business until his removal to Grand Rapids, where he soon entered the grocery trade, in which occupation he was engaged throughout his business career, as senior of the firm of John Killean & Son. He came to this city in October, 1863, and it was thereafter



continuously his place of residence. In the Spring of 1882 he was elected alderman from the Fourth ward, and was re-elected to the same office in the Spring of 1884. During his service as alderman he was for three terms in succession chosen president of the common council. In the Spring of 1886 he was appointed a member of the Board of Police and Fire Commissioners. At the general election, in November, 1886, he was elected one of the representatives from this city to the State Legislature, and was re-elected in 1888. At the charter election in April, 1889, he was elected mayor of the city of Grand Rapids, which office he held one term.

Edwin F. Sweet was born at Dansville, Livingston County, New York, Nov. 21, 1848. He received his early education at a district school and afterward attended the Dansville Seminary, where he prepared for college. He entered Yale College, in the fall of 1867, and remained there until he graduated, in the Summer of 1871. On Oct. 9 of the same year he left his native county to make a tour of Europe and the Holy Land. He sailed from New York on the above date for Liverpool, visited most of the noted European cities and countries, passing through Wales to London, thence to Paris, Marseilles, Rome, Naples and Brindisi. He next sailed to Alexandria, Egypt; up the river Nile to the first cataract, and subsequently spent one month in Palestine. On his return he passed through Syria, Constantinople, Athens, and thence to Venice; and from there he passed through Switzerland, Austria, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Scotland, etc. He sailed from London and arrived in New York, Oct. 9, 1872. On Jan. 1, 1873, he went to Ann Arbor and entered the law department of the Michigan University. From this school he graduated in April, 1874, and came to Grand Rapids upon invitation of Hughes, O'Brien & Smiley to enter their employ as clerk. Here he remained two years, until April, 1876, when the firm of Stuart & Sweet was formed. Mr. Sweet was elected mayor of Grand Rapids in 1904 and 1905, and in 1910 was chosen to represent the Grand Rapids district in Congress. In 1913 he received the appointment from President Wilson as Assistant Secretary of Commerce and still holds that position, with residence in the city of Washington. In 1916 he was the Democratic candidate for Governor of Michigan.

A complete new charter for the city was adopted by a vote of the people in 1905, and under this the management of the city was conducted until 1917, when the Commission form of government was instituted. A Charter Commission, composed of leading citizens, was given the task of preparing a new charter and this commission finished its work on May 4, 1916. It was immediately passed by the State Legislature, received the approval of the Governor, May 17, 1916, and at a special election held on Aug. 29, 1916, the new Commission form of government was adopted by the votes of the qualified electors of the city. The more important and radical changes in this new form of government consist in the change from the Federal or Aldermanic form to the Commission plan with a City Manager. The old ward lines for the election of commissioners were eliminated and the city is divided into three wards, each ward being represented by two commissioners nominated and elected by the city at large. The six, together with one commissioner nominated and elected from the



city at large, constitute the City Commission, in which is vested all legislative and administrative powers. All municipal primaries and elections are non-partisan. The City Commission elects one of its members mayor and provision is made for the election of a city manager, city attorney, city clerk, city treasurer, and three assessors, one from each ward, by the City Commission. The following departments are established, eliminating the old system of board management: An auditing department, of which the city comptroller is the head; a taxation department, of which the city assessors are the head; a finance department, of which the city treasurer is the head; a department of law, of which the city attorney is the head; a department of public service, department of public safety, department of public welfare, and a purchasing department. The last four named departments are under the supervision of the city manager with power to remove and appoint department heads. The legal and finance departments are managed respectively by the city attorney and city treasurer, each of whom are appointed by the city commission and subject to removal by them. The members of the city commission act as a civil service board, pass upon all appeals from tax rolls as a board of review, and together with the city treasurer, comptroller, three assessors and twelve supervisors, four elected in each ward, represent the city on the county board of supervisors. Provision is made in the charter for the initiative, referendum and recall of all elective officers, except judges of courts of record and courts of like jurisdiction. A civil service code is incorporated, under the supervision of the city commission, introducing a merit system for appointive officers and positions in all departments. Radical departure is also made from the old charter in matters pertaining to taxation, public and special improvements, public utility franchises, and sinking fund provisions. Provision is made for the appointment by the city commission of a Board of Art and Museum Commissioners, for the control and management of the museum and all property of the city intended for art or an art collection. Provision is also made for the establishment of a house of correction and work farm by the city commission, but the question of providing and maintaining such an institution by the city must first be submitted and approved by three-fifths of the electors voting thereon. In regard to liquor traffic regulations provision is made making it mandatory upon the city commission to grant licenses to all applicants who have been engaged in the business a year or more immediately preceding the date of their application and have not been found guilty of any violation of the liquor laws of the State or the liquor ordinances of the city. The pension provisions fix the maximum pension for all city employes in extra hazardous employment at \$50 per month after twenty-five years of service and who have reached the age of 55 years, and for the pensioning of the dependents of such employes killed while in the service of the city.

The first election under this commission form of government was held on the first Monday of April, 1917, and the following officers were chosen, taking their positions on the first Monday in May, following: Commissioner-at-large, Philo C. Fuller; commissioners, First ward, Julius Tisch for two years and William Oltman for one year; commissioners, Second ward, Christian Gallmeyer for one year



and William J. Clark for two years; commissioners, Third ward, Daniel C. Kelley for one year and W. E. Tallmadge for two years. At the first meeting of the city commissioners, following the election, Philo C. Fuller was elected to the position of mayor and the following officials were selected: City manager, Gaylord C. Cummin; city clerk, Joseph C. Shinkman; city comptroller, Rudolph Doornink; city treasurer, George F. Greene; city attorney, Ganson Taggart; Board of Assessors—First ward, William Crewe; Second ward, Frank C. Steinmann; Third ward, Judson D. Forsyth. At the second election under the new charter, held April 1, 1918, George E. Ellis was elected commissioner-at-large, and Messrs. Oltman, Gallmeyer, and Kelley were re-elected for two-year terms. Christian Gallmeyer was selected as mayor.

The present limits of the city of Grand Rapids may be defined as follows: Beginning at the northeast corner of Section 18, town 7 north, range 11 west; thence south to the southeast corner of said Section 18; thence east along Leonard street to the northeast corner of the west one-half of Section 20, said town and range; thence south along Fuller avenue to the south line of said Section 20; thence east along Michigan street to the northeast corner of Section 29, said town and range; thence south along a line one-half mile east of Fuller avenue to the southeast corner of Section 5, town 6 north, range 11 west; thence west along Burton street to the northwest corner of the west half of Section 7, said town and range; thence south along Madison avenue to the center of said section; thence west to the northwest corner of the south half of Section 12, said town and range; thence north along Clyde Park avenue to the northwest corner of Section 1, town 6 north, range 12 west; thence west along the line of Hall street extended to center of Grand River; thence northeasterly in center of river to the west line of Section 35, town 7 north, range 12 west; thence north along Bristol avenue to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of Section 14, town 7 north, range 12 west; thence east along North street to the northeast corner of said southwest quarter; thence north along Garfield avenue to the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of said Section 14; thence east along Mason and Knapp streets to place of beginning. The actual territory embraced within these limits is a little more than eighteen square miles. Politically, under the old system of government, the city was divided into twelve wards, and each addition to the original three wards represented an increase both in population and territory. The outer limits of the city are changing from time to time with the extension of the city's boundaries and the addition of new territory. The population of the city in 1910, according to the United States census, was 112,571, but considering its continued growth during the past years one would be safe in estimating its population, in 1918, at 145,000.

#### LABOR MATTERS.

Among the early societies in Grand Rapids was a lodge of the Order of the Mechanics' Mutual Protection—the first "labor union" established in the place, organized about 1849, and maintaining an association some ten years. It had a membership of upward of one hundred mechanics, employers and employes alike, having for its object the promotion of their mutual interests. Among those who were



officially connected with it were Robert Hilton, Albert Baxter, Kendall Woodward, David Burnett, Wilder D. Foster, Orlando K. Pear-sall, Henry R. Naysmith, J. M. Stanly, and Benjamin Luce. The society dissolved amicably, about 1859, and divided its assets among the members. It held its sessions in Faneuil Hall for some years, and afterward in a brick block, a little north of Erie on old Canal street.

Kendall Woodward came here, in 1836, was a mechanic, an architect and builder, and was in trade for some years near the present Campau Place.

Henry R. Naysmith was born in the town of York, N. Y., March 1, 1823. He was reared on his father's homestead and while still a youth engaged in the manufacture of clothing. Before attaining his majority he served an apprenticeship to the carpenter's trade, and his skill as a builder was attested by numerous structures of different kinds in various parts of Grand Rapids and throughout Kent and other counties. Actuated by a laudable desire to increase his knowledge, after coming to Grand Rapids, he availed himself of the advantages of attending an academy taught by Prof. Everett, under whose able instruction he pursued his studies two winters, making rapid progress during that time. Subsequently, he taught two terms of school, after which he turned his attention exclusively to contracting and building, following the same with success and financial profit for many years, until failing health compelled him to relinquish manual labor. For two terms he was a member of the Board of Review, and during the active years of his business life few, if any, mechanics of Grand Rapids planned and executed more work, or did as much toward the material development of the city. From 1862 to 1875, Mr. Naysmith was engaged in the manufacture of builders' materials, and conducted the leading industry in this line then in the city. He died Sept. 30, 1894, beloved and honored by all who knew him.

All cities have labor troubles, at some time in their history, and Grand Rapids is no exception to the rule. In 1885, when general and widespread restlessness prevailed throughout the country and the demands of organized labor for better wages and shorter hours were attended with scenes of violence and collisions with civil and military authorities in many States, a general reduction in wages by the employers of this city was decided upon. The cut in wages was less than ten per cent. in the average, but it caused many workmen and some factories to suspend operation for a time. There were large numbers of unemployed people in the streets, and a meeting of the citizens was held to devise means for their relief. This resulted in the organization of an employment bureau, with committees to obtain situations for as many as possible. The county superintendents and the city director of the poor had many more to care for than usual. The distress was greater from lack of employment among day laborers than among mechanics. About the same time the Knights of Labor had organized a boycott against the street railway, and carryalls were running in opposition to the street cars. The city authorities co-operated with the citizens in efforts for relief, and within two months matters were running smoothly, again, with work for all at living wages.

It has been well said that the following year, 1886, "was the



period of strikes and boycotts," and it marked the beginning of an era of low prices, occasioned by a diminution of the world's gold supply—by which all values are measured—from which there was little permanent relief until the mines of South Africa and Alaska turned their golden streams into the channels of commerce and industry, in 1898. At the period of which we write, the entire Gould system of railway lines was affected in the Southwest and freight traffic on all lines was at a standstill in Chicago. And it could not be expected that a city like Grand Rapids, with its many important industries and thousands of laborers, both skilled and unskilled, should entirely escape. There was agitation of the labor question in the latter part of April, resulting in a partial adjustment between employers and employes, May 1, as to wages and hours of work, but in the following week numbers of men in several factories reconsidered and organized a strike. Their demands were for eight hours to constitute a day's work, without a reduction of wages. A compromise was effected, and the wheels of industry moved on as before.

Differences between the street car company and its employes came to a crisis on Saturday, May 9, 1891, when the men decided to strike, and on the following day street car traffic was suspended. The strike occurred at the same time that the street railway company was changing the system from cable and horse cars to electricity. A big demonstration, arranged by the Central Labor Union, was held on May 14, and a monster parade took place, the ranks being augmented by laboring men from the factories, which were forced to close for the occasion. By invitation the city and county officials had a prominent place in the parade and the different unions in the city were all represented. It was the largest event of the kind in the history of the city until that time, over 3,000 men being in line. On May 19, disturbances broke out in all portions of the city, cars were attacked and property destroyed, and a week later a repetition of such conflicts occurred. One of the biggest riots in connection with the strike occurred on May 28, when several hundred strike sympathizers assembled on old Canal street, in front of the Berky & Gay factory. The street car track was obstructed and the police and crowd engaged in a lively scrimmage, in which several arrests were made. The most serious riot, however, which occurred during the progress of the strike, took place on the morning of June 10, when a mob assembled near the Sweet street depot, intent, as it was supposed, to blow up the wheelpit, which would have stopped the cable lines of the entire north end system of the street railway. Policemen were present in force and a ten-minute pitched battle ensued, in which a number on each side were injured and fourteen of the rioters were arrested, charged with conspiracy. This incident seemed to mark the beginning of the end of the strike. The sympathy of the public was gradually withdrawn from the strikers, and after a long, bitter contest, lasting nearly seven weeks, the street railway employes' union declared the strike off on June 23. Under the circumstances the men had made a most obstinate struggle, and only yielded when to continue the strike seemed utterly useless.

The most serious labor trouble that has ever afflicted Grand Rapids occurred in 1911, when the affiliated unions, embracing the



employees of the more than forty furniture factories in the city, waged an unsuccessful strike in support of their demands for better working hours, better pay, and the abolition of the piece work system. In October, 1910, the furniture workers, approximating 4,000 men, voted for a nine-hour day, a 10-per cent. wage increase and the abolition of piece work. On Feb. 9, 1911, they sent a proposed trade agreement to the manufacturers' association, asking for a conference; but the manufacturers, ignoring the unions, replied to the individual employees, saying that they would conduct their factories on an "open-shop" basis. The situation becoming extremely serious, on March 23, Mayor George E. Ellis offered to name an arbitration committee, if desired, and the following day the carpenters' district council offered to arbitrate. On March 25, the men voted to strike on April 1, if their demands were not granted in the meantime. This action was taken by a referendum vote, 3,272 votes being cast, and 95 per cent. were in favor of the strike. The manufacturers repudiated the arbitration proposals, and also declined to meet labor representatives before the Board of Trade committee. At the request of citizens, pending efforts to formulate a conference plan, the leaders of the union delayed the strike call, and both sides agreed to let Bishop Joseph Schrembs, of the Catholic church, and Rev. Alfred W. Wishart, of the Baptist church, name a commission of inquiry. Sidney F. Stevens, Heber A. Knott, and John P. Hayes were named, and with the two reverend gentlemen began their hearings on April 6. Learning that the manufacturers had refused their demands, on the morning of April 19, the furniture workers in every factory laid down their tools and left their benches. On April 22 the Marvel Manufacturing Company signed an agreement for nine hours' work with ten hours' pay, and two days later the Veit Manufacturing Company and the Interchangeable Fixture Company also signed with their men. On May 13, the Nachteggall Manufacturing Company came to an agreement with its employees, and on May 15 the Fritz Manufacturing Company did likewise, but the remaining factories sternly maintained their position. The first serious trouble of the strike occurred at the Widdicomb factory on May 15. Stones were thrown and the police drew their revolvers, but the trouble ended in the arrest of several rioters, the firemen coming to the relief of the police and turning streams of water upon the mob. On May 17, a temporary restraining order was granted, forbidding picketing or congregating of crowds near factories, and on June 5 the order was made permanent. A public meeting, preceded by a big night parade, with 2,409 strikers in line, was held on July 15, at Fulton street park, and five days later, in a big mass meeting at the Majestic theatre, the strikers voted to amend their demands so as to ask only fifty-five hours work with sixty hours' pay and a straight nine-hour day after Jan. 1, 1912. The Fancy Furniture Company, on July 24, entered into an agreement with its men upon that basis, and on Aug. 8 the Gunn employees returned to work with a similar understanding; but with the exceptions mentioned every firm stood out until the end, which came on August 17, when the members of the allied unions saw the futility of further effort and voted to end the strike.



## PUBLIC WORKS, BUILDINGS, ETC.

The origin of the present water-works system of Grand Rapids is of comparatively recent date; though more than seventy years ago, the need of an abundant supply of pure, fresh water arose. Prior to that time the supply of water was drawn almost exclusively from the many springs that came bubbling and sparkling from the bosom of Mother Earth. All along the bases of the hilly elevations, and well up their sides also, were springs of most excellent water; and on the lower levels it was necessary to dig but a few feet for an ample supply for the households of the early comers. And the water was not only cool and pleasant to the taste, but, until the town became thickly settled, healthful. In the infancy of this settlement there was a large spring, from which came a rivulet large enough to run a turning establishment, half way up the hill north of Michigan street—clear, cool and excellent for domestic use. Just a little southwest from where the Junior High School building stands, under the brow of the hill, was another, from which a brook ran down Fountain street. In 1848 the latter, and a few years afterward the former, were turned into log pipes for the people “down town.” The experiment was a decided success, and these primitive water-works furnished the people with an ample supply of pure water and were utilized for many years. The increase of population in the city and the growing importance of her thriving industries made imperative the demand for an ample water supply, and led to much discussion and many proposed plans. In the fall of 1848 a number of gentlemen, of whom among the active workers were Canton Smith and Joseph J. Baxter, started the enterprise, of which we have just written, of supplying the most thickly settled portion of the then village with good spring water for domestic use. For that purpose they took the water from the aforementioned spring. The pipes were the old fashioned pump logs—pine logs of about a foot in diameter, with a three-inch bore. The boring of the logs was done by Lucius A. Thayer, who fitted an auger especially for that purpose and operated it by water power in one of the factories above Michigan street, between the canal and the river. The pointing and fitting of the logs was done by hand, by a ship carpenter. A square curb, made of two-inch oak plank, was sunk at the spring. The trench in which the logs were laid was a ditch, at no point more than three feet in depth. The piping was completed that fall from the spring down Fountain street to Ionia, thence to the National Hotel on Monroe street. In the following year the pipes were extended to what is now Campau Place, when it was found that the company had as many customers as that spring would supply. Meantime application as made to the legislature for an act of incorporation, which was passed April 2, 1849, constituting George Coggeshall, Thompson Sinclair, Charles Shepard, Canton Smith, James M. Nelson, and their successors and assigns, a body corporate, to be known as “The President and Directors of the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company,” with a capital of not to exceed \$30,000. The purpose of the organization was to be that of “conducting a plentiful supply of pure, wholesome water to said village, for the use of the inhabitants of said village, and to supply reservoirs for extinguishing fires.” The charter provided that the supply should “be obtained from the springs



of water in and about said village, from Coldbrook, from the lake or lakes from which it has its source, or either of them, and from no other source." This charter was very comprehensive in the powers which it granted to the company, giving the right to enter upon and use streets, lands and springs in and about the village, as might be requisite for its legitimate work, and moreover its franchises were given substantially in perpetuity.

The Hydraulic Company's charter was drawn by Solomon L. Withey, who became a member of the company, and its first meeting was held, June 20, 1849, at which time its organization was completed by the election of officers. Canton Smith was its first president, and its stock books were opened for subscription, June 22, 1849. Having reached the limit of its supply, while the demand was steadily increasing, the company began to look about for more water. This they obtained from springs a little south of Wealthy street and east of Jefferson, laying logs from that locality to Fulton street, and thence toward the river. They then had a fairly adequate supply for the residents along their lines, and that portion of the then business part of the town west of Division and south of Pearl street. But the city continued to grow, while the springs did not, and more water must be had. The company went still further south and gathered the outflow from several springs on what was then called the "Penney eighty." About 1854 Christopher Kusterer and John Mangold began the use of a large spring between Michigan and Hastings, a little east of Ottawa street, as a source of water supply for domestic use. Previously, at a very early day, a portion of the stream from that spring had been carried down Michigan street to a watering trough in front of the old Bridge Street House, and this for years made an excellent watering place for horses. In the summer of 1855 the council gave permission to the proprietors of the Bridge Street House and Western Hotel to lay pipes from the spring mentioned for their own use. Kusterer and Mangold, under a franchise obtained in 1859 from the council, after having constructed a reservoir in which they collected the waters from this and other contiguous springs, laid pump logs down Michigan street and through Kent alley to Lyon street; also to and along by the buildings on the west side of old Canal street, as far south as Huron, and down old Canal street to near Pearl, giving to the residents thus reached a fair supply of excellent water for domestic use. Neither they nor the Hydraulic company had sufficient pressure to carry water much above the second floors of buildings even on the lower levels. Only wooden pipes or logs were used until 1857, when upon the first paving of Monroe street, the Hydraulic company laid a small iron main down that thoroughfare.

In 1864, Amos Roberts, Warren P. Mills, James Lyman and Joseph Penney became stockholders in the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company. The total stock subscription, Oct. 29 of that year, was \$24,800. In 1870 the water rights of the Kusterer & Mangold Company were by mutual arrangement merged in those of the Hydraulic Company. In 1872 the company undertook the construction of a deep reservoir upon ground purchased of Mr. Penney toward the southeastern part of the city, in the hope of greatly increasing its supply. This was a large brick curb with a cast-iron shoe at the bottom, sunk to a depth of about thirty feet.



But the increase in population in the city and the growing importance of its thriving industries made imperative the demand for a more ample water supply, and led to much discussion and many proposed plans. Actual progress toward the desired result was not made until 1873, various causes interfering to delay the project. A Board of Public Works had been created for the city, by an act passed in March, 1873, under whose control the subject of water supply and the construction of the necessary works was placed, after a general plan should have been submitted to the council. In July the Board submitted a plan, with the recommendation that \$250,000 be raised for that purpose, and this was submitted to popular vote and adopted. The financial panic of that year delayed the work somewhat, but pipes were purchased, and before the first of December about two miles were laid down in Michigan, old Canal and Monroe streets, and connected with a small reservoir belonging to C. C. Comstock, on the brow of the hill, near Newberry street. Thus a temporary supply of water was obtained, adding considerably to the means for extinguishing fires. In the Spring of 1874 work was resumed, and in that year about eleven miles of the banded wood pipe known as the Wyckoff patent pipe was laid. The site for a reservoir, comprising about five and one-half acres, was purchased, and the reservoir constructed, at a total cost of \$54,082.71. A site for the pumping house, on the bank of the river at the mouth of Coldbrook, was also purchased, and the building erected that year. This ground included five lots, with 250 feet front on Monroe avenue by 186 feet on Coldbrook street. The choice of this site gave, in addition to the control of the water in Carrier creek, Coldbrook and Lamberton creek, access to Grand river, rendering it certain that in no event would the city ever be short of water, at least as good as the river would afford.

The original pumping engines were designed by Demetrius Turner and constructed by Butterworth & Lowe, of Grand Rapids. The river water being considered unfit for use in summer, resort was had to Coldbrook and Carrier creeks, near their junction, about 1,900 feet east of the pumping works. The distribution at first included about twelve miles of pipe—about two miles being of cast iron and the rest of wood. The iron pipe was laid by Charles Peterson and the wood pipe by T. B. Farrington and H. A. Branch. Work done in 1874 on the city water works cost upward of \$260,000, of which about \$118,000 was for the pipe system. A published statement showed at the end of that year 10,389 feet of iron pipe laid, and 56,262 feet of wood pipe—about 12.7 miles in all. The wood pipes were kept in use about fourteen years, doing good service under strong pressure. The work during the year 1875, in addition to laying of pipes in the streets, included a pipe across the river for supplying the west side, and the purchase of ground for and the construction of a settling basin, the latter being located on Coldbrook, just above the crossing of the railroad track, where it is joined by Carrier creek. On Jan. 1, 1876, the city had 99,668 feet of water mains laid. Attached to these were 199 public and several private hydrants, and 107 stop valves. The engineers estimated the cost of the works up to that time at about \$341,000. In 1876, about three and a half miles of water mains were laid, and thirty-six hydrants. The amount expended upon the works that year was \$29,328.



From 1878, onward for several years, very little progress was made in improving the city water works, the chief labor and outlay being for their care and preservation. Various efforts were made to obtain funds to procure an increase of water supply, but all efforts were defeated for a period of about ten years. And the Hydraulic company did not make much addition to their water resources until 1886, when they procured a site near the east bank of the river, about three-fourths of a mile north of the city, where they sank a reservoir or well, and established a pumping house station. The city attempted to restrain and enjoin the Hydraulic company from further laying of water pipes within the city, but the Superior court decided in favor of the private corporation, in 1887, and its decision was affirmed by the State Supreme court. Up to the end of 1888 the Hydraulic company had laid about fifteen miles of iron mains, and displaced all but three or four miles of the old wood pipes. They had also erected at the corner of Clinton and Newberry streets a stand pipe, 100 feet high and 20 feet in diameter.

After having defeated, four times in succession, the proposition of enlarging and extending the municipal plant, in 1888 the citizens of Grand Rapids seem to have experienced a radical change in their ideas; and on Aug. 7 of that year the electors voted—yeas 2,799; nays 946—in favor of procuring by loan \$150,000 to extend the mains and improve the water supply. Bonds to that amount were issued, and from this sale \$168,348.35 was realized. A contract was made for thirty-one miles of pipe, and thirteen miles were laid before the end of 1888. Other improvements made to the water system included a filtering crib in the center of the river, with a pipe from the crib to the pumping house well; also a new boiler house. A very important item was the cast iron main, sixteen inches in diameter and 600 feet long, laid across the river in 1886, near the pumping station. This took the place of an earlier and smaller one which had become valueless. The legislature, at the session of 1889, passed an act authorizing the city to borrow a sum not exceeding \$80,000, issuing bonds therefor, to substitute iron pipe for the wooden pipe, for the erection of a standpipe, and for other improvements of the water works system. In accordance with a vote of the common council, bonds to the amount of \$80,000 were issued and sold at a premium, and the proceeds were applied as designated in the act—the more important improvements being the replacing of the wood pipe with iron, the extension of the mains, the erection of a standpipe, and the construction of the filtering beds in the channel of Grand river, nearly opposite the pumping house. The later plans and work involved the abandonment of Coldbrook and Carrier creeks as sources of supply, the great growth of the city in that direction having too much contaminated their waters; and with them the settling basin also went out of the use for which it was made. In 1890 a standpipe of wrought iron, 30 feet in diameter and 75 feet high, was built on a lot purchased for that purpose, next to the reservoir.

On Feb. 12, 1892, a bill of complaint for foreclosure was filed in the United States Circuit Court for the Western District of Michigan by the American Loan & Trust Company, of Massachusetts, against the officers of the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company, and on



April 25, 1893, Thomas J. O'Brien was appointed receiver by the Court. The company was then operated under the receivership until Oct. 23, 1906, when, with the consent of the parties interested, the property was returned to the management of the board of directors. At the session of the legislature, in 1905, a bill was passed repealing the act of 1849, incorporating the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company, and providing for the allowance and payment of the claims of the company against the city for the value of its tangible property. The repealing act was attacked in the courts; was held valid by the decision of Judge Perkins, May 7, 1907, and that decision was affirmed, July 13, 1908, by the State Supreme court, and by the United States Supreme Court, Dec. 12, 1910. Since the passage of the repealing act negotiations have been entered into and have been prolonged, looking to the purchase of the tangible property of the Hydraulic company by the city. A proposition was finally made by the company, offering to sell its interests to the city for \$80,000. The question was submitted to the electors at the Spring election of 1917, but it was defeated by a vote of 10,737 nays to 6,506 yeas. The company is still engaged in business and is supplying water to its customers.

In 1893 a subsidence basin was excavated in the rock bottom of the river to a depth below the bottom of the pump-well, with walls built from the river bottom to a point above the surface of the ground about the station of the city water-works plant. The basin was built with a partition wall through the center longitudinally, so that one side could be cut out of service whenever it becomes necessary to remove sediment from it, by closing gates, leaving the other side open for use. The basin was covered with a roof to prevent dust or foreign material from getting into the water, as well as to protect the public against injury. The same year a larger conduit than the old one was found essential, and plans were adopted for excavating a new one which extended from the subsidence basin to the intake. The sides of the conduit were lined with masonry and an arch of stone work built, the arch being covered with concrete masonry. In connection with this work was the extension of Coldbrook and the culvert across the pump house grounds to the river. This connection was about 200 feet long. The river rock bed was cleared off, stone abutments built thereon upon a footing of concrete which extended entirely across the work. The last 100 feet toward the river was plastered with cement mortar, one inch thick, making the bottom where it passed over the new conduit and for a considerable distance each way as tight as a cistern. This arrangement placed the outfall of the creek culvert below the conduit, in the rapid current of the river. In addition to the items mentioned, there was a large quantity of earth deposited between the retaining wall and the subsidence basin and around the culvert.

In January, 1892, a Gaskill pump was purchased by the city at a cost of \$48,000. For the year ending April 30, 1894, 887,839,831 gallons of water were pumped into the stand pipe. To meet the continually increasing consumption of water the board, in 1895, erected a 15,000,000 Triple Expansion, High Duty Nordberg Pumping Engine, which, when installed, together with the Gaskill pumping engine, transferred to the hill service, was able to furnish a daily supply



of 23,000,000 gallons, a quantity anticipating the city's demands for a number of years. The large pumping engine was installed Sept. 5, 1895. To economically distribute the quantity thus used, it was necessary that an additional force main be placed on the hill service, remote sections of which were for a time poorly supplied, as well as to increase the standpipe to give additional pressure on that service, and a large main was laid to that section of the low service where the supply was inadequate. These required expenditures were necessary to supply the territory that was added to the city in 1891. Because of the extremely cold weather in the winter of 1898-99 many water mains were frozen, and the following summer those which gave the most trouble were lowered. In 1898 the city commenced a policy of putting in meters for metering the water to residences. It was expected that this would result in reducing the amount of water pumped.

In 1899 the city employed two water experts of New York to examine the water-works of the city and the conditions of the city and surrounding territory and report thereon. On Dec. 6, 1899, these experts reported that the source of supply was ample in quantity, but that it was contaminated by sewage and manufacturing wastes, which rendered the water unsuitable for domestic use. The experts also reported that there was an insufficient pressure of water for fire protection. Early in the morning of July 2, 1900, the city reservoir burst its walls to the south of the head of Livingston street and poured its contents of 6,000,000 gallons with a tremendous roar to the south and east and moved away nearly everything in its path. The pumping station had sent too much water into the reservoir, and with the break the flood swept down the hill east to Coldbrook Creek, which was soon swollen to the size of a great river. Houses and sidewalks were overturned and wrecked, trees and telephone poles were torn out of the earth, and Newberry street, Coit avenue, Clancy street, and Bradford street for many rods were torn up and completely wrecked. No lives were lost by the accident, but several were severely injured, and the loss in property was estimated at nearly \$100,000. In the year 1902-3 two new boilers were installed at the pumping station at a cost of \$3,500 and a steam header at a cost of \$5,149.32. At the Spring election in 1903 \$170,000 was voted for water-works extension. At the Spring election of 1907, in accordance with the recommendation of the Board of Public Works, there were submitted to the electors of the city the question of a water supply in three different forms: In favor of Lake Michigan water, in favor of Grand River water, filtered, and opposition to a bond issue for either Lake Michigan water or filtration of Grand River water. The election resulted as follows: In favor of Lake Michigan water, 3,391; in favor of Grand River water, filtered, 1,779; opposition to a bond issue for either, 2,635. Thereupon, the question of issuing bonds, in the amount of \$2,500,000, for the purpose of securing water from Lake Michigan, was submitted at a special election, held Sept. 17, 1907, but the proposition was defeated, receiving only 839 affirmative votes to 8,727 in the negative.

In March, 1909, the council authorized the purchase of one twelve-million-gallon vertical triple expansion pumping engine, and the same year a new pumping station was erected upon the site of the



old one, at the corner of Monroe avenue and Coldbrook street, the same to be used as a combination pumping and lighting station. The question of a bond issue in the amount of \$395,000 was submitted at the Spring election of 1910, such bond issue being designed to make possible the erection of a rapid sand filtration plant for the purification of the water taken from Grand River. The proposition received a favorable response from the electors and was adopted by a vote of 9,225 yeas to 5,921 nays. A tract of land, bounded by Monroe and Taylor avenues and Caledonia and Quimby streets, was purchased, and the plant was finished and in full operation by Jan. 1, 1913. The total cost of construction was \$430,000. The water department keeps the grounds about its stations in fine shape, making them parks in fact. It furnishes water to the citizens at a very low rate, and fire protection is had at 2,104 hydrants, according to the Forty-third (and last) annual report of the Board of Public Works. It is in many respects a model municipal utility. It has had the great advantage of municipal ownership, and its mains reach nearly every corner of the city. It has tunnels under the river to carry its pipes, and its pumps work ceaselessly day and night, but it has such reserve power that never are all the pumps running at once. Probably no department of the city government, say its admirers, has been developed to such a high state of efficiency during the past twenty-five years as the water department. The average daily consumption of water, according to the last published report, in Grand Rapids was 10,263,000 gallons. The total amount of water pumped in the same year was 3,756,230,000 gallons, and 92 per cent. of this was metered. Every resident is regarded as a consumer of water from the municipal water-works, and the number of wells is so small that they are not taken into account. Water consumers paid the city \$195,874.68, according to the same report, and the whole income of the water department was \$522,544.69. The department paid out \$485,546.20, the actual cost of operation being \$109,801.72. One of the big expenses of the department was \$194,340.99 for construction work in extending the system, and the balance on hand was \$36,998.49.

Closely allied to Grand Rapids' water-works system, and quite as essential, is the sewerage system, than which no city can boast a more perfect one, and few equally complete and satisfactory. Prior to 1865, however, the city had no definite plan for sewerage; and although the population then numbered 11,000, but a few sewers had been built. In that year, what was called a city grade bench was established, and thus was brought about a general uniformity of descent and flowage. The system was extended from time to time and now covers the whole area of the city. Each year witnesses an extension to meet the growing demands, and it is a matter of civic pride that this, like Grand Rapids' water-supply system, is equaled in completeness and utility by few and surpassed by none.

For many years the municipal offices of the city of Grand Rapids were located wherever a convenient place could be had; but the rapid development of the city and the vast increase of municipal business long ago outgrew the limited facilities and space thus afforded, and an urgent need of a permanent building, in which the business of the city's various departments could be transacted and its records be



preserved, began to be felt. This demand for a substantial and permanent home assumed definite shape in 1885, when it was decided to erect a building that should in all respects be worthy of the city. The site selected was the north side of Lyon street, between Ottawa and Ionia streets. The building was constructed by W. D. Richardson, of Springfield, Ill., after plans and specifications prepared by E. E. Myers, of Detroit, and it presents an appearance at once substantial, imposing and handsome. The building has a frontage of 160 feet on Lyon street, and is ninety-six feet deep, and is four stories in height above the basement. The main tower at the southwest corner rises to the height of 163 feet. The building is supplied with numerous massive vaults, and the interior arrangements throughout have been constructed after the most carefully studied plans, with a view to convenience, comfort, and artistic effect, with the result that everything has been secured that seemingly could be desired. The cost of the building was about \$315,000 and at the time of its completion it was considered one of the finest public buildings of its class in the West.

Prior to the occupancy of the new city hall, the officials had various habitations. On what seems to be good authority, it is related that the first meetings of the common council of the city of Grand Rapids were held on the south side of Monroe, a little above Market street. These meetings were held immediately after the organization of the city government, and a little later the "City Fathers" occupied quarters in the Taylor building, near what is now called Campau Place. They were later domiciled in the Commercial Block, near Campau Place, and still later in the postoffice building at the Arcade. Some of the city offices were established in what had been known as the McReynolds Block, on the east side of old Canal street, south of Lyon. In 1876 the common council began holding its meetings in Morey's Block on Pearl street, which became known as the old city hall. This building was occupied until the present city hall was completed, in 1888.

The first government office established in Grand Rapids was the postoffice, and the first building for that use was the mission station on the west bank of the river, which building was occupied by Leonard Slater, who was appointed postmaster by President Jackson, in December, 1832. Mr. Slater's term of service continued until Sept. 1, 1836. His successors have been: 1836 to 1838, Darius Winsor; 1838 to 1841, Alfred D. Rathbone; 1841 to 1845, James M. Nelson; 1845 to 1849, Truman H. Lyon; 1849 to 1853, Ralph W. Cole; 1853 to 1857, Truman H. Lyon; 1857 to 1861, Harvey P. Yale; 1861 to 1866, Noyes L. Avery; 1866 to 1867, Charles H. Taylor; 1867 to 1869, Solomon O. Kingsbury; 1869 to 1877, Aaron B. Turner; 1877 to 1878, Peter R. L. Peirce; 1878 to 1882, James Gallup; 1882 to 1885, Homer N. Moore; 1885 to 1890, James Blair; 1890 to 1894, George G. Briggs; 1894 to 1898, Thomas F. Carroll; 1898 to 1912, Loomis K. Bishop; 1912 to 1915, W. Millard Palmer; and the present incumbent, Charles E. Hogadone, who received his commission in 1915.

After settlers began to come in and the inconvenience of bringing letters across the river in canoes began to be felt, Joel Guild acted as deputy or clerk, and in 1834 the reception and delivery of mail matter was conducted at his house, which stood on the site of the



present National City Bank building. In 1836 the office was removed to the east side of the river and was kept at the house of the postmaster, Darius Winsor, at the corner of Ottawa and Fountain streets, where now is the New Aldrich Block. Mr. Winsor soon removed the office to a point on Monroe street, nearly opposite Market. The next move was in 1838, to a little building on the west side of Prospect Hill, on Lyon street. When Mr. Nelson assumed the duties of the office, in 1841, he moved it to old Canal street, just south of Lyon, and in 1844 he again moved it to the south side of Monroe street, above Market, whence it was moved by Mr. Lyon to the east corner of old Canal and Pearl streets, where now is the Lovell Block; in 1849, from the corner a little north on the east side of old Canal street; in 1853, two doors further north; in 1857, to Exchange Place or alley (Arcade), midway between Pearl and Lyon streets; in 1861, to the McReynolds Block, corner of Lyon and the Arcade; in 1868, to the Eagle Building, north side of Lyon, between old Canal and Kent (now Bond), where it remained until the government building, in the block bounded by Lyon, North Division, Pearl and Ionia streets, was finished and taken possession of, Nov. 15, 1879. This building gave ample accommodations for transacting the business necessary at that time, but with the phenomenal growth of the city and the enlargement of the demands upon the postoffice, to meet the urgent need the United States government decided upon a new building. In 1906, a bill was introduced in Congress by Hon. William Alden Smith, and the same was passed, making an appropriation of \$500,000 for the purpose. The site of the old building was decided upon as the location and work was commenced in 1908. The building is three stories in height above the basement, and Vermont marble is greatly in evidence in its construction. The style of architecture is of the square old-fashioned type, and is at once ornamental, substantial, and impressive. The building throughout is finished and furnished after the most approved style, and gives the Government's postal service and other offices in Grand Rapids a home commensurate with their importance and dignity, and it is also worthy of the city.

#### PUBLIC PARKS.

Grand Rapids has a park system in which its citizens take a pardonable pride. It consists of 398 acres, scattered throughout the city, and there is not a man, woman or child living in any part of Grand Rapids who cannot reach an open space of grass, water and fresh air in a five minute's walk from home. And most of the park lands have been acquired by the city within the last quarter century. It was not until 1905 that Grand Rapids citizens fully awoke to the realization that the city needed parks. Long before that time the Monument Park, Foster Park, Lincoln Place, Fulton Street, John Ball, Highland, Lincoln, Creston, Crescent, Lookout, and Pearl Parks had been acquired by the city. Four of them are sufficiently large and pretentious to be properly called parks, and these are: John Ball Park (137.41 acres), forty acres of which was bequeathed to the city by the late John Ball. This fine park is located at the westerly end of Fulton street, between Sibley street and Butterworth street, and extends west to the city limits. The original park, forty acres, was



bequeathed to the city by the late John Ball, in 1869, and the widow's interest was acquired April 22, 1884, for \$750. An adjoining 17.3 acres was acquired Aug. 5, 1891, from Agnes Fitzpatrick, for \$8,500. The north forty acres was purchased from Thomas F. Carroll, I. M. Turner, Mrs. F. B. Turner, and the Fourth National Bank, Nov. 2, 1895, for \$21,500. An adjoining nine and one-half acres was purchased from Agnes Fitzpatrick, Oct. 22, 1897, for \$5,000. A strip of seven acres adjoining the north forty on the west was deeded to the city Sept. 4, 1906, by Julia A. Richards, under an agreement to make certain improvements without cost to her. An adjoining 22.46 acres was acquired by purchase from the McNamara estate for \$29,300. The present area of this park is 137.41 acres, and it cost, exclusive of improvements, \$65,050. Its present estimated value is \$207,200. Highland Park contains 34.22 acres. One and one-half acres of this park, lying north of the Grand Trunk Railway, between Grand avenue and Union avenue, was purchased from Alpheus Bissell and wife, Melville R. Bissell and wife, and Benjamin A. Harlan, April 29, 1873, for \$1,200, and three and one-half acres were donated by the same parties. In March, 1911, ten parcels were purchased from the Bissell estate, Mrs. Bissell, Coit estate, Kennedy & Thompson, and others, for \$18,225. In 1911 and 1912 the park was extended by purchase to Bissell street on the north and College avenue on the west at a cost of \$13,000. The present estimated value of this park is \$60,000. Lincoln Park (between fifteen and sixteen acres) is situated between Bridge street, Jackson street, Garfield avenue and Marion avenue, and was purchased in June, 1873, from Theodore F. and Julia A. Richards, Jane D., Charles F., Edward A., and Emma L., Clarence R., and Ania M. Tuttle, for \$10,000. Its present estimated value is \$70,000. Creston Park contains fifteen and two-tenths acres. This lovely park is situated around and above the old water-works settling basin, which is situated so low down that it is nearly out of sight from the upper portion of this park, and is surrounded by shrubbery and lawns. Ten acres of this park was purchased July 26, 1875, for \$15,000. On Feb. 25, 1911, about one acre was purchased from the Oliver Machinery Company. The present estimated value of the park is \$25,000.

As above stated, these four were the only ones sufficiently large in extent to deserve the name of parks, when the present park system was established in 1905, and the others were in reality only ornamental city squares. They were: Monument Park (about six-hundredths of an acre), which is in reality only a triangular grass plot ornamented with handsome flower beds and a soldiers' monument, erected as a result of private subscription. This park originally contained five acres, as was acquired by condemnation proceedings in the Circuit Court from the estate of Lyman I. Daniels, Sept. 1, 1843. The portion north of Monroe avenue was sold, leaving the present site bounded by Fulton street, Monroe avenue and Division avenue. Its present estimated value is \$31,500. Foster Park (twenty-nine hundredths of an acre) is at the corner of State and Cherry streets, and was donated to the city, Aug. 8, 1849, by Canton Smith. Its present estimated value is \$6,000. Lincoln Place, lying at the corner of State and Washington streets, was donated to the city, Aug. 8, 1849, by Canton Smith. Its area is eleven one-hundredths of an acre and its present estimated value is \$6,000. Fulton Street Park, lying between



East and West Park avenues, Fulton street and Library street, was purchased from Louis and Sophia Campau, Aug. 12, 1852, for \$600. It has an area of 1.65 acres, and its present estimated value is \$364,967. A handsome fountain ornaments it, and it is improved with grass plots, trees, walks, etc. Crescent Park (ninety-five hundredths of an acre) is on Bostwick avenue, between Lyon street and Michigan street. The south one-half was purchased from Arthur and Charlotte Meigs, Aug. 2, 1887, for \$500, and the north one-half was donated by T. H. Cuming and G. K. Johnson. Its present estimated value is \$15,000. Lookout Park, containing about two acres, nearly adjoins the reservoir property and is located at the northwest corner of Fairview avenue and Newbury street, and was purchased from Mary E. Crosby, in 1893, for \$4,500. Pearl Park, containing one-tenth of an acre, is located at Walker avenue, Seventh street and Fremont avenue, and was designated as a park by resolution, July 22, 1895. Its estimated value is \$200. Antoine Campau Park, lying between Division avenue, Ryerson street, Ionia avenue and Delaware street, was donated to the city by Martin A. Ryerson, of Chicago, July 10, 1899. It has an area of 3.58 acres and its present estimated value is \$35,000. DeCommer Park, lying on Grant street, was declared a public park by ordinance Jan. 29, 1900. It has an area of one-tenth of an acre, and its present estimated value is \$500. This completes the list of parks up to 1905.

Prior to the year named there was no park board. But the new charter, adopted in 1905, provided for a park board consisting of five members, and Mayor Edwin F. Sweet appointed on the first board J. Boyd Pantlind, Herman G. Barlow, Frank E. Pulte, Lester J. Rindge, and Charles B. Blair. J. Boyd Pantlind was chosen president of the board. In 1906, the playgrounds, located on Madison avenue and Burton street, were donated to the city by Charles W. and Jessie S. Garfield and Julia L. Fletcher. These playgrounds have an area of twenty-five acres and their estimated value is \$50,000. The following year, six acres, constituting the Mary Waters' Field, located on Lafayette avenue, Legrand street and North avenue, was donated to the city by Dudley E. and Florence Hills Waters. Its present estimated value is \$10,000. Julius Houseman Field, located between Diamond avenue, Houseman avenue and Sophie street, was donated to the city, March 22, 1907, by Hattie Houseman Amberg, as a memorial to her father, Julius Houseman. It has an area of six acres and its present estimated value is \$10,000. This is under the direction and control of the Board of Education. Susan N. Baldwin gave a tract of one-tenth of an acre, located at Lake Drive and Fulton street, the following year, and the park was named in her honor. Its present estimated value is \$1,500.

Coit Park, located at the north side of Hall street, between the Pere Marquette Railway and Rathbun avenue, was presented to the city by the D. W. Coit estate, and was accepted by the council June 13, 1910. It has an area of seven and one-third acres and its present estimated value is \$3,500. The North Avenue Playgrounds, situated on the east side of North avenue, between More street and the Grand Trunk Railway, was presented to the city Feb. 16, 1911, also by the D. W. Coit estate. It has an area of seventy-six hundredths of an acre and its present estimated value is \$500.



On April 15, 1911, the city purchased from Lillian B. Rickenbaugh and others the property at the northwest corner of Cherry street and Eastern avenue, and in November and December of that year acquired the two lots immediately adjoining on the west. This playground has an area of about 1:54 acres and cost \$18,500.

On May 9, 1911, the city purchased from Crabb & Hunter the property on Madison avenue and during April and May purchased the three lots adjoining on Delaware street, at a total cost of about \$15,000. This playground has an area of two acres.

Briggs Park, situated on the extreme northern boundary of the city, and comprising twelve acres on Knapp street, east of Wartrous avenue, was purchased from Charles S. Briggs, Nov. 1, 1911, for \$6,000. Its present estimated value is \$10,000.

Harrison Park, comprising 18.1 acres in the northwestern part of the city, lies between Muskegon and Alpine avenues, north of Myrtle street. It was acquired from the Harrison Land Company and John and Charles Barr, together with adjoining property, in November, 1911. The investment amounted to \$44,000, which will be largely reduced by the sale of the property outside of the park area. The present estimated value of the park itself is \$30,000.

Franklin Street Park is located on the south side of Franklin street, between Benjamin avenue and Fuller avenue. The greater part of it was purchased from F. K. Cargill and McPherson Brothers in 1911, several smaller parcels adjoining being also purchased, and Mrs. Eliza S. McConnell Butler generously donated six lots. The area of the park is twenty acres and cost about \$21,000. In 1906 the city purchased about one acre across Fuller avenue for a standpipe, at a cost of \$1,350. The present estimated value of the park is \$50,000.

Third Street Playgrounds, situated at the corner of Broadway avenue and Third street, was acquired by purchase during 1911 and 1912, at a cost of \$23,000. Its present area is 1.75 acres.

Rumsey Park is located on Godfroy avenue, between Franklin avenue and B street, and was acquired in 1911 and 1912 from the Grand Rapids Gas Company and several other property owners, at a cost of about \$25,000. George A. Rumsey, James L. Rumsey, Ellen M. Wyman, and Martha R. Simonds donated eighteen lots for this park. It has an area of twelve acres and its present estimated value is \$35,000.

Wilcox Park is situated between Milton street, Youell avenue and Edward Lowe's property, and was purchased from the East End Land Company and several small holders, in 1911, for about \$19,480. Four lots were acquired from the Reed's Lake Avenue Company by condemnation proceedings, at a cost of \$1,100. The area of this park is 11.5 acres. In 1913 about three acres more land was purchased with a fund of \$10,000, bequeathed by Frederick P. Wilcox, for the purchase of park lands in this section of the city. The present estimated value of this park is \$35,000.

Comstock Riverside Park was presented to the city by Mrs. Clara C. Russell and Mrs. Etta M. Boltwood. This beautiful site comprises forty acres on the bank of Grand River and extends from the Soldiers' Home to the Hydraulic Company's pumping station. An



additional parcel of land containing about fifty acres, adjoining this on the east, was purchased by the city, Sept. 4, 1917, at a price of \$10,458. The present estimated value of the park is \$30,458.

Ellsworth Avenue Park is located on Market avenue and Ellsworth avenue. It has an area of eight-hundredths of an acre and its present estimated value is \$1,500. Hosken Park lies between Lake Drive, Cherry street and Diamond avenue, and the records do not show when or how it was acquired. It has an area of one-tenth of an acre and its present estimated value is \$100. Michigan Street Park is located at Michigan street and Coit avenue. It has an area of one-fifth of an acre and its present estimated value is \$5,000. Reservoir Park comprises the bluffs north of the city reservoir and covers about twenty-eight acres of this slightly hill. It was acquired from Taggart, Denison & Judd and several small holders, in 1911, at a cost of nearly \$30,000. Extensive improvements have been made. The estimates of acreage and value are those made by the park governing board.

An organization of representative men, styling themselves the Park and Boulevard Association, has extensive plans for the improvements and extensions of the park and boulevard system. A definite plan of action in the acquirement of park lands and the laying of boulevards and driveways is being carried out. It has numerous plans for the immediate future, such as constructing a boulevard to encircle Reed's Lake and opening driveways in other directions. The board has under consideration also the establishment of children's playgrounds all over the city, so that these places of sport may be even more accessible to the youngsters than the parks. Eugene V. Goebel, experienced in landscape gardening and park management, is superintendent of the public parks.

#### ORGANIZED CHARITIES, HOSPITALS, ETC.

"The poor ye always have with you." This indictment of the social system which existed nineteen hundred years ago is equally applicable to that of the Twentieth century, and Grand Rapids is no exception to the universal rule in these later days. But the benevolence of the city's more prosperous population in the support of the great number of charitable organizations for the aid of the unfortunate ones who are unable to keep the wolf from the door, is one of the things of which the Furniture City may well be proud. Nearly all of the 138 churches of Grand Rapids have auxiliary societies, composed mostly of the women of the church, which deal more or less with charitable work, and there are numerous asylums and homes within the city. The municipality and the county, with poor departments, contribute largely to the succor of the poor, and besides there is the Associated Charities, which is perhaps the largest single agency for the relief of the financially distressed.

The first meeting for organized charity ever held in Grand Rapids was held on Dec. 16, 1846, in response to a call issued in the village papers, at the schoolhouse on Prospect Hill. Those present formed themselves by resolution into a benevolent society for the relief of the poor and the destitute within the village. The first officers of the society were Mrs. C. Cuming, president; Mrs. W. G. Henry,



secretary, and Mrs. Lucinda Shepard, treasurer. This was a season of great business depression, when men were out of work, and their families suffering for the necessities of life, as a consequence of this lack of employment. The society was maintained by donations and subscriptions. There was from the first a desire to establish a charitable institution and, with this end in view, a lot was purchased on East Fulton street. The establishment of this institution became a subject of much discussion, and different plans were proposed and advocated. Finally, in 1858, a corporation was formed, known as the Grand Rapids Orphan Asylum Association. The same year a small house was rented on Prospect street, and opened for use, with Mrs. Lucia Johnson, a most excellent and capable woman, as matron. Soon thereafter, a small house on Lagrave street was purchased and occupied by the society. Here for six years its work was done. But in 1861 every heart and hand were given to our sick and suffering soldiers, and Grand Rapids hospitals absorbed all interests. As a consequence, the work of the society lagged, and when, in the fall of 1863, the matron died from the effect of her services at the camp hospitals, the ladies were obliged to close the little home. But in the trying years during and following the close of the Civil War the society maintained its existence, and in January, 1873, it became the Union Benevolent Association, with a charter providing for all kinds of benevolent work, and with the privilege of maintaining and managing a home and a hospital for the aged, the infirm, the sick, and the needy. A transfer of property was made and negotiations commenced for a suitable building, which resulted in the purchase of the old Cuming homestead on Bostwick street, near Lyon. This building was occupied until the erection of the Union Benevolent Association Home, at the corner of College avenue and Lyon street, which was ready for occupancy in February, 1886. This home remained in use until, by the generosity of John W. Blodgett, the present commodious and handsome building, known as the Blodgett Memorial Hospital, was erected. The present building is very satisfactory and convenient and most admirably suited for its purpose.

The Butterworth Hospital, located on Bostwick avenue at the southwest corner of Michigan street, had its origin in the kindly impulses and sympathetic hearts of the ladies of the congregation of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, who felt that a place of shelter should be provided for deserving ones who might otherwise be compelled to seek the cold charity of the world. This movement was started in 1873, before any of the numerous institutions, which have since assumed a share of the burdens, had come into existence. Among the ladies who founded this worthy charity was Mrs. H. W. Hinsdale. In the beginning they labored under many difficulties, but finally succeeded in opening the doors of a comfortable home, and by the generosity of R. E. Butterworth and other generous donations and subscriptions from the people of Grand Rapids, the present fine hospital was erected and is maintained.

Among the most notable charitable institutions where destitute people are cared for in the city are: The Holland Union Benevolent Association Home, a home for aged, indigent and infirm persons of general good conduct and character, under the management of trustees with Justus C. Hertstein as superintendent, 1450 East Fulton



street; Home for the Aged, conducted by the Little Sisters of the Poor at 240 Lafayette avenue; Home of the Good Shepherd, at 1315 Walker street; Christian Psychopathic Hospital, 701 Bristol avenue; Kent County Juvenile Home, Mrs. Pauline Regester superintendent, east side of Walker street, third north of Leonard street; Woman's Home and Hospital, Daisy V. Welbourn matron, 1435 East Fulton street; D. A. Blodgett Home for Children, 920 Cherry street; St. John's Orphans' Home, under the superintendency of the Dominican Sisters, north side of Leonard, between North and Lafayette avenues; St. Mary's Hospital, in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, 250 Cherry street; St. Mary's Hospital Nurses' Home, 217 Lafayette avenue; St. Mary's Maternity Home, 215 Lafayette avenue; St. Raphael's Home in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, 227 Lafayette avenue; Salvation Army Evangeline Home and Hospital for Girls, 1215 East Fulton street, and several others. Each of these has its special form of charity and all are doing a great amount of good. The hospital accommodations of Grand Rapids are abundant, and besides those mentioned in the foregoing are the City Contagious Disease Hospital on Fuller avenue opposite Flat street; the DeVore Hospital and Sanitarium, at 417-423 Clancy avenue, and of which Frances L. J. DeVore is superintendent; The Keeley Institute of Michigan, at 733-735 Ottawa avenue; Reed's Lake Sanitarium, of whom Thomas B. O'Keefe is the medical director and treasurer, and the Tuberculosis Sanitarium, on Fuller avenue opposite Flat street.

Thus it will be seen that the people of Grand Rapids have by charity or otherwise made ample provision for the sick and suffering among them, and the hospitals are well supplied with the requisites demanded by modern-sanitary science, being in these respects fully abreast of the time. And besides the regularly established hospitals there are a number of asylums, houses of refuge, industrial schools for boys and girls, homes for the aged and the friendless; for the wayward, for infants, for foundlings, and for orphans; there are also, as have been enumerated, several benevolent aid societies and associations largely maintained by the charity of citizens, and designed to care for the infirm, the destitute, the struggling, the fallen; to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted.

#### NATIONAL SOLDIERS' HOME.

Although not strictly a Grand Rapids institution, and not altogether one of charity—what the soldier gets is his by rights—the National Soldiers' Home is one of the things which justly merits local pride. The United States is foremost among the nations of the earth in caring for its needy former soldiers. The home which it established here was the direct outgrowth of a movement or an agitation inaugurated for the purpose of extending aid to soldiers. Byron R. Pierce was a potent factor in securing the location of the home here. It is located on Monroe avenue, one and one-half miles north of the city limits, and comprises 132 acres of land. There are ample accommodations for the soldiers who desire a home, and here, where the beauties of nature are enhanced by the skill of the landscape artist the inhabitants of the home may spend their declining years in peace.

“Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife.”



## NOTABLE FIRES.

Grand Rapids has always had a reasonable good fire department, and has generally managed well in providing securities against loss by fire. But of course the city has had frequent visits from the fire fiend. Prior to 1844 there had been numerous small blazes, but it was on Friday, July 12, of that year, that the first fire of note occurred. The court house, a two-story wood building, which stood on the public square (now Fulton Street Park), was burned to the ground.

In 1854, on Jan. 15, saw-mills of H. S. Wartrous and David Caswell, located on Mill street just below Bridge, were destroyed by fire, and on May 16 of the same year, four buildings on the north side of Monroe, above Ionia street, were burned to the ground. Another building was torn down to stop the progress of the fire.

The Bridge Street House, the third wooden hotel erected in Grand Rapids, and which was built in 1837, by or for Charles H. Carroll, was burned on Feb. 10, 1855. It was located on the northwest corner of Bridge and Kent (now Michigan and Bond) streets, and at the time of the fire was kept by Gottlieb Christ. A fire that is sadly remembered, on account of the burning of the county records, was the burning of Taylor & Barns' four-story block, at the southeast corner of old Canal and Lyon streets, and the postoffice building, on Jan. 23, 1860, and which caused a loss of \$90,000. The county clerk's, treasurer's and register of deeds' offices were in the Taylor & Barns building at the time, and records of untold value were destroyed. On April 15, of the same year, fifteen wooden buildings east of old Canal, between Lyon and Crescent streets, were burned with a loss of \$15,000. Another destructive fire was the burning of Letelier & Robinson's sash and blind factory, at the corner of old Canal and Trowbridge streets, on the morning of Sept. 7, 1869, with a loss of \$15,000. Other notable fires which occurred while the city was dependent, in whole or in part, upon its volunteer fire department for protection, was the burning of John Westcott's house, at the corner of Monroe and Spring streets, in 1853; of nearly all the north half of the block next south of Michigan street, between old Canal and Bond streets, in 1862; of Sweet's Hotel, twelve buildings between Bond and Ottawa streets south of Michigan street and including the Reformed Church, Squier's Opera House and Flouring Mill, the National Hotel, Butterworth's brick building by the river west of the canal basin and which was used as a coffin factory, buildings each way from the Lovett Block at the corner of old Canal and Pearl streets, and the old Congregational Church and other buildings between Division and Spring streets at Monroe, all of which fires occurred in 1872; of the Kent Woolen Mills at Mill street north of Michigan, the brush factory at the west end of the Pearl street bridge, Perkins Brothers & Company's tannery near the railroad junction and north city limits, about fifteen acres north of Michigan street and between Bond and Ionia streets, and the Christ brewery, a large establishment, and many other fine buildings of brick and of wood, all of which fires occurred in 1873; and in 1874, on May 26, six buildings on the north side of Bridge street, between Scribner and Turner streets, were burned; on June 4 of the same year, Verdier & Brown's hardware store at 102 old Canal street; on July 7, the Michigan Cen-





SCENE AT THE FIRE IN JULY, 1873





tral Railroad depot building; on July 8, the wholesale millinery store and other buildings on Bond near Lyon; on Aug. 21, the woodenware works and other shops and warehouse between Hastings and Trowbridge streets on the east side of old Canal street; on Oct. 11, the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad freight depot on the west side, and on Nov. 27 a building on Pearl street between the Lovett Block and the Arcade.

Early in the history of the embryo city it was deemed advisable to provide for some means to stay the progress of such fires as might from time to time break out in the village, and thus the volunteer fire department had its beginning in 1849. In that year Alert Fire Company was organized, and among the members thereof were such men as Charles H. Taylor, Solomon O. Kingsbury, Wright L. Coffinberry, John Clancy, William D. Roberts, Daniel McConnell, Frank N. Godfroy, William H. Almy, Thomas M. Parry, and Wilder D. Foster, all of whom were young men who became widely known in later years. Charles H. Taylor became the first foreman of the company. By dint of much solicitation, the department succeeded, the same year, in obtaining for its use a hand engine from Rochester, N. Y., which was considered at that time a great acquisition, and which later did good service on more than one occasion. There were three fire companies in existence at the time of the incorporation of the city, in 1850, and each company was uniformed and pretty well equipped for that period, the members of each taking pride in their organization. A joint organization of the companies had been effected, and they assumed the name and dignity of a fire department, with Ira S. Hatch as chief engineer, and Wilson Jones as assistant chief. Under the revised city charter of 1857, by an ordinance passed July 30, 1859, the fire department was reorganized, and a chief engineer and four assistants were elected, and ten fire wardens—two for each ward—were appointed. The first officials thus charged with the conduct and management of the city fire department were Wilder D. Foster, chief engineer; William Hyde, F. G. Martindale, Thomas W. Porter, and Henry Martin, first, second, third, and fourth assistants, respectively. But it was not until 1895 that the full pay fire department came into existence, although for a dozen years prior to that time the department had what was termed a half pay system, under which its members followed such occupations as they chose during the day, and were required to be on duty as firemen only at night.

The Eagle Hotel fire, which occurred on Feb. 5, 1883, should be mentioned among the conflagrations, as it was sufficient in its importance to deserve a place in the history of the city. When the flames were first discovered, at 1:50 o'clock on the morning of the fated day, they had gained such headway that it was useless to attempt to save the building, and the energies of the members of the fire department were directed to saving adjoining buildings and the lives of the unfortunate inmates of the hotel. The structure was three stories high, contained probably 100 rooms and was well filled with guests on the night of the fire. Fortunately, all the inmates of the house were roused in ample time and all escaped without further injury than that occurring from getting out of doors on an icy, cold night, undressed. On April 21, of the same year, the Grand Rapids Furniture Company's building on Butterworth avenue was totally destroyed; on



May 25 a like calamity was visited upon the Carpet Sweeper factory, near the upper end of the canal, and on the following day Noble & Company's plaster mill, three miles down the river, was totally destroyed with a loss of \$40,000.

On the afternoon of June 7, 1892, the ignition of escaping gas under the stage caused a fire to break out in Powers' Opera House, on Pearl street. By the prompt action of the fire department the flames were gotten fully under control, but not until the interior of the popular playhouse had been converted into a charred mass of ruins. On Nov. 8 of the same year a fire occurred in the lumber yards of the Michigan Barrel Company on North Monroe street. The origin of this fire was never ascertained. The value of the lumber and other property destroyed was placed at \$10,000. On Nov. 22 fire broke out from causes unknown in the factory of the Folding Table Company, corner of Wealthy avenue and South Ionia street. The building was a wooden one, and on account of the nature of its contents was entirely consumed.

May 23, 1895, was long remembered as a day of fire. Shortly after the noon hour the department was called to put out a fire which started from electric wires in the stables of Greenly & Company, corner of Ionia and Fountain streets. The building was entirely consumed, the loss being \$2,300, fully covered by insurance. The stable was an old frame building, owned by Mrs. Anna Newkirk. The firemen had been at work scarcely an hour when another alarm was turned in, calling them to the rescue of the Second Reformed Church, on Bostwick street near Lyon street, and which had been fired by sparks from the burning barn. It was one of the most spectacular fires ever seen in the city, and its progress was witnessed by thousands of residents. The fire first caught around the base of the steeple, completely girdling it, when it fell, crushing in the roof of the edifice. Only the walls were left standing, and the loss to the church society and contiguous dwellings, which were badly scorched, was \$17,620.

On the night of Jan. 26, 1896, occurred a fire which, by the peculiar circumstances, is warranted more than a passing notice. Shortly before midnight the residents of the city were startled by an explosion which was heard for miles around. Even residents on the West Side were so startled by it that they dressed hastily and rushed out of doors, believing it to be near their homes. As a matter of fact the explosion was in the residence of W. E. Boyd, 244 Fuller street, and it was of such terrific force that the building was lifted off the foundation walls and deposited several feet distant. Passersby noted that flames burst out all over the building at about the moment of the explosion. The house was furnished at the time, Mr. and Mrs. Boyd living in rooms down town. Both house and contents were entirely consumed at a loss of \$2,200. The fire is supposed to have been incendiary.

A very destructive fire occurred Feb. 17, 1896, when the Houseman Block, at the corner of Ottawa and Pearl streets, burned. The night was bitter cold, and when the firemen responded to an alarm at 2:55 a. m., they had before them about as severe a job of fire fighting as they had ever experienced. The fire had gained considerable head-



way when the department arrived, and it became necessary for the men to devote their first attention to removing the people from the building, as the escape of those unfortunate ones had been cut off from the regular stairway. Battalion Chief Walker went to the top floor of the old building and there found Mrs. Wedgewood crouched upon the floor. He removed her into the corridor of the new building, where she was turned over to Patrolman White of the police department, and conveyed to the ground. Captain John Goodrich, of Hose Company No. 4, found a man and a woman, and later a small boy, lying upon the floor of the burning building, and carried them to a place of safety. Captain Boughner and his son, of Truck No. 4, rescued Captain McCarthy of the Reed's Lake steamer, "Hazel A.," together with his wife and daughter. The captain and his men continued the work of searching for occupants of the building, and later rescued Mr. and Mrs. Pickle, Mr. and Mrs. Gibbons, and Mr. and Mrs. N. P. Allen. Other persons made their escape by the means of the iron fire ladder in the rear of the building, being assisted by printers employed in the composing room of the Grand Rapids Democrat, and by Captain Fenn and men, of Truck No. 3. There were two deaths as the result of the fire, Mrs. Wedgewood and H. W. Beecher, the latter a prominent insurance man. The death in each case was due to inhaling the smoke and the excitement incident to the occasion. The firemen suffered severely while performing their duty. The total loss was \$33,092.25.

July 18, 1901, was a day long remembered. There had stood for several years on the southwest corner of Ottawa and Monroe streets a building known as the Luce Block. The tenants had been making extensive repairs and had removed some important partitions. About 1 o'clock in the morning there came a noise like the belching of many cannon or the bellowing of mighty thunder. Citizens were awakened and saw immense clouds of dust rolling and tumbling about where the Luce Block had stood. Owing to its weakened condition it had collapsed. An alarm of fire was turned in and the department responded. If there was fire, as testimony in court subsequently tended to prove, previously to the collapse, the latter so smothered it that when the apparatus reached the scene no fire was visible. Chief Lemoin sent the firemen back to their stations, and he remained to watch the course of events. Suddenly the whole heterogeneous mass became a seething, roaring furnace. Alarms were again sounded and in rushed the various pieces of fire-fighting machinery. It proved to be a fierce, stubborn, contrary fire, and smoldered for days. John O'Connor fell from a ladder and sustained injuries from which he never fully recovered. The loss was total and reached hundreds of thousands of dollars. The insurance was eventually paid, but not until several suits for payment of the same were instigated.

As the result of a stroke of lightning in a severe electrical storm, in the early morning of Aug. 4, 1908, the Grand Rapids Paper Box Company, at Campau and Fulton streets, was damaged to the extent of \$50,000. All of the fire department not attending other fires, of which there were several at the time, was summoned and an effort was made to confine the flames to the north portion of the building, where the blaze originated, but in spite of the efforts of the firemen



the three upper floors of the four-story building were destroyed and the roof fell with a crash. The contents on the first floor, including machinery, were saved.

The entire block of stores and buildings on Grandville avenue, between Coates and Lillie streets, was threatened by a conflagration, May 20, 1911. The fire originated in the storage room of the Valley City Biscuit Company's bakery. The flames spread with lightning rapidity and in less than an hour the bakery was completely destroyed, two stores were badly burned and three residences and a barn were damaged by fire and water. The damage to the bakery was estimated at \$25,000, while losses to other buildings and contents aggregated \$10,300. A heavy downpour of rain soon after the fire originated probably prevented a more disastrous blaze. There have been other fires of note in Grand Rapids, but those mentioned have been the most destructive both as to life and property.

#### FRATERNAL AND OTHER SOCIETIES.

The social spirit of the city of Grand Rapids is revealed in a long list of secret and benevolent societies, and from the records of each organization it would seem that each one is prosperous. The first meeting of the Masonic fraternity in the then village was held on March 19, 1849. At that time there were between forty and fifty Masons in Grand Rapids, and among those who petitioned for a dispensation, under which a lodge of Free and Accepted Masons could be organized, we find the names of Truman H. Lyon, Ira S. Hatch, Aaron Dikeman, Henry Eaton, William D. Moore, Julius Granger, and George M. Mills. The first officials of "Grand River Lodge" were: Truman H. Lyon, master; Ira S. Hatch, senior warden, and Aaron Dikeman, junior warden; and in addition to these gentlemen, those who signed the by-laws were Henry Eaton, treasurer; William D. Moore, secretary; Julius Granger, senior deacon; George M. Mills, junior deacon.

Valley City Lodge No. 86 was organized in 1856. Among the charter members were David S. Leavitt, worshipful master; James W. Sligh, senior warden, and Edward S. Earle, junior warden. This lodge has been quite prosperous. Doric Lodge No. 342 came next in point of organization, and the original officers were William K. Wheeler, worshipful master; N. B. Scribner, senior warden; and W. B. Folger, junior warden. York Lodge No. 410 was organized under a dispensation, the first meeting, a special communication, being held Sept. 7, 1894, and the original officers were Charles Fluhrer, worshipful master; Edmund M. Barnard, senior warden; Fred H. Ball, junior warden. Malta Lodge No. 465 was organized on July 7, 1911, the charter being granted May 29, 1912, and the original officers were Louis T. Herman, worshipful master; A. J. Williams, senior warden; Glenn P. Thayer, junior warden.

On March 19, 1850, was organized the first Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in the city, under the name of "Grand Rapids Chapter No. 7." Among the charter members were Truman H. Lyon, Amos Roberts, William Blackall, Joshua Boyer, and Forris D'A. Foster, and the first convocations of the chapter were held in the upper story of a little stone building on Market avenue, near Monroe. Columbian



Chapter No. 132 was organized under a charter granted on Jan. 16, 1894, among the charter members being Harvey C. Taft, Joseph C. Herkner, and J. Edward Earle. Of the Royal and Select Masters there is but one council in the city—Tyre Council No. 10.

On July 23, 1856, a commandery was organized in Grand Rapids, and among the charter members were D. S. Leavitt, William P. Innes, and Fred Hall. The charter was subsequently granted by the Grand Commandery of Michigan on July 2, 1858, and the first officers under the charter were David S. Leavitt, eminent commander; James W. Sligh, senior warden; William K. Wheeler, junior warden; James W. Sligh, treasurer; John McConnell, recorder.

To epitomize the Masonic order in Grand Rapids there are now, thanks to the persistent work of the members of the organizations, five Blue lodges, two Royal Arch Chapters, a Commandery of Knights Templar, the Scottish Rite bodies, and five Eastern Star chapters. One of the acts of Masonry in the city was the erection of the Masonic Temple, which is one of the most beautiful lodge buildings in the West.

From the beginning of its Masonic activity the city has enjoyed considerable prominence in that universal fraternity. Lovell Moore served as master of the Grand Lodge of Michigan, in 1864; John W. Champlin in 1871, William Dunham in 1877, R. C. Hathaway in 1887, Edwin L. Bowring in 1895, and John Rowson in 1905; and William P. Innes was elected secretary of the Grand Lodge, in 1878, and served in that position until his death, in 1892. In the Thirty-third degree—an honor desired by every member of the order, and which is realized by only a very few—Grand Rapids has been exceptionally fortunate. At the beginning of the year 1918 the following named Masons now resident in the city were the possessors of that distinction, and it speaks well for the Masonic spirit of this locality: Richard D. Swartout, Wilson R. Andress, Guy Johnston, Bruce Moore, John Rowson, William Alden Smith, Clarence W. Sessions, William E. Elliott, S. Eugene Osgood, Mark Norris, George G. Steketee, and Axtel P. Johnson.

Irving Lodge No. 11 was the pioneer Odd Fellows' lodge in the city of Grand Rapids, and it was duly instituted on Jan. 15, 1846, with five charter members. They were Samuel B. Ball, Harvey P. Yale, William D. Roberts, Benjamin Smith, and Joseph Stanford. Irving Lodge continued work eleven years, and then surrendered its charter to the Grand Lodge, Jan. 21, 1857. In 1858, Grand Rapids Lodge No. 11, which was really a revival of Irving Lodge No. 11 under a new name, was instituted, and among its charter members were Lewis Porter, James M. Green, Eben Smith, jr., and Ebenezer Anderson. On Aug. 5, 1873, a charter was granted for a new lodge in Grand Rapids, to be known as Enterprise Lodge No. 212. The first officers installed were: Henry Baldry, noble grand; H. M. Reynolds, vice-grand; A. W. Paris, recording secretary; A. G. Duffers, permanent secretary, and Allen Engle, treasurer. Its lodge room was in Luce's Block. On June 29, 1885, it was consolidated with Grand Rapids Lodge No. 11, to which it turned over its property and \$549.42 in cash. Wallhalla Lodge No. 249, chartered in 1875, was the first one authorized to work in the German language. Its charter was granted on the petition of nine members, and it continued work until August,



1882, when it surrendered its charter. The other Grand Rapids lodges are: Creston Lodge No. 41, Enterprise Lodge No. 406, Grand River Lodge No. 12, Imperial Lodge No. 427, and South End Lodge No. 250. In the city there are sixteen organizations of all sorts of the Odd Fellows' fraternity. Inasmuch as the organization was the first to take root in the embryo city of Grand Rapids its growth has been favored with that advantage. It has expanded to the extent that there are canton and encampment lodges and a number of organizations of which women are the directing geniuses.

Eureka Lodge No. 2 of the Knights of Pythias order was organized by G. H. Allen, Chancellor Commander of Olympic Lodge No. 1, of Detroit, assisted by E. A. Smith, I. Esdal, F. Rice, A. W. Crotine, and other members of the order resident in Detroit. Among those who became members of this pioneer lodge of the Knights of Pythias were H. H. Chipman, J. S. Long, A. Walling, W. J. Long, C. B. Benedict, William P. Innes, W. F. Bradley, L. E. Hawkins, S. P. Bennett, W. H. Sheller, S. P. Stevens, and C. H. Deane, the nine gentlemen last named constituting the first corps of officers. Valley City Lodge was instituted in 1890 and Imperial Lodge in 1892, and on Jan. 6, 1908, these three lodges were consolidated into one, taking the name of Grand Rapids Lodge No. 2. The order has grown rapidly in popular favor and membership, and Cowan Lodge and Lily Lodge are prosperous local units of the order, making a total of three lodges in the city at the present time. The Uniform Rank division of the order is also represented by Valley City Company No. 26. Cowan Temple No. 101 and Mizpah Temple No. 6 are the lodges of Pythian Sisters.

The Royal Arcanum instituted Bryant Council in Grand Rapids, in 1879, and two councils are now in existence in the city, known respectively as Bryant and Valley City.

Grand Rapids has more lodges than the average city of its size, and of the scores who find a home here it is practically impossible in the space allowed to give an individual mention of more than a few. In doing this an effort has been made to select those which to the greatest extent have withstood the vicissitudes of years. The younger organizations are equally entitled to honorable mention, and if it were possible to do so within the scope of this work it would cheerfully be given them. The local lodges of Elks and Eagles have had a phenomenal growth in the period since their formation, and together they have a total membership running well up into the thousands and constantly increasing. One of the features of lodge life in the Valley City was the Inaugural Masonic Fair, in 1915, when thousands of visitors from all portions of the country attended and made merry in the city for more than a week.

The Modern Woodmen of America, one of the largest orders in existence, has five active lodge organizations in the city. There are a number of Catholic organizations, of which may be mentioned a lodge of the Knights of Columbus. The work of these organizations has been co-operative with the work of the Roman Catholic Church and the result has been shown in the interest taken in the acquiring of insurance protection and in the fraternal features of the organizations.

There are five lodges of the Independent Order of Foresters in the city, and in all there are in Grand Rapids, counting the temper-



ance organizations which class themselves as fraternal organizations, 152 lodges. It points to the vast fraternal spirit which pervades the Valley City and the fact that Grand Rapids is a city of home-loving men and women. And women are not weak in their organizations. In the auxiliaries to the Masonic, Odd Fellows, and other organizations are found memberships as great if not greater than any found in the male orders. This may be explained in a measure when it is seen that the women's orders may be joined by any female members of the family of a member of the main organization. There are a number of labor unions, of different kinds and having different names, represented in Grand Rapids.

In addition to the fraternal and labor organizations, of which brief mention has been made in the foregoing pages, there are in existence at the present time scores of associations, societies, and clubs of various kinds, including the sporting and recreation associations, the musical societies, and established associations for promoting what may be called the general business interests of Grand Rapids. There are also many minor associations of business and professional men, organized to advance special interests or promote social intercourse among the members.

#### CEMETERIES.

Around the resting places which have been set apart for the burial of the dead lingers the tenderness of the living, and it is fitting that this chapter which is devoted to the city of Grand Rapids should be closed with a brief review of the cemeteries.

Fulton Street cemetery was established in 1838, by the trustees of the village, who purchased of James Ballard six acres of ground of what is now a part of that "city of the dead." It was to be reserved and used expressly as a cemetery for the village of Grand Rapids, one-third of it for the Roman Catholics, and it was to be kept in order and repair at the expense of the village, but the original tract has since been largely added to. Since the cemetery was originally laid out, large sums of money have been expended in cutting and smoothing wide, graveled roadways, maintaining beautiful flower beds, planting trees, erecting a fine fountain and otherwise making it a beautiful and restful city of the dead. For beauty of natural location and taste in artificial adornment it has not many superiors. The first interment on the record appears to have been Andrew Haldene, who died Sept. 6, 1835.

In the early history of Grand Rapids there was a plat of ground in the "Village of Kent," west of Livingston street and between Walbridge and Coldbrook streets, which was used as a burial place for citizens. A few graves were made there at an early day, and occasional burials down to as late as 1855, but it was never formally dedicated to the public. The remains interred there were later removed, chiefly to Fulton Street cemetery. In the early village days a parcel of ground, near where is now the corner of Madison avenue and Cherry street, was used occasionally for burial purposes. Subsequently the remains which had been placed there were also removed to the Fulton Street cemetery.

When the white people came into this region there was an Indian burial ground on the West Side, nearly opposite the foot of the rapids. Its use as a cemetery was continued by the Catholic priest or



missionary who came there, and near it the little church of Father Baraga was situated. Thus it became the early Catholic cemetery, and was used as such until after the Indians removed and other grounds were procured by the Catholics on the east side of the river. As before stated, one-third of the Fulton Street cemetery was set apart for their use. St. Andrew's cemetery was established on the east side of Madison avenue, between Prince and Delaware streets, in 1852, ten acres having been purchased from William Howard by Rev. Charles L. DeCeunink and deeded to Bishop Lefeore, in December of the same year. This ground becoming too small, and also being in the city limits, what is now known as the Mt. Calvary cemetery was purchased on May 3, 1882, by the Rev. John C. Ehrenstrasser, who was then pastor in St. Mary's parish, and it was subsequently consecrated according to the Roman Catholic ritual. The cemetery is located on the south side of Leonard street, near the western limits of the city, and it is nicely improved. The Polish Catholic cemetery is situated in the township of Walker, northeast corner of Walker and North streets, and one-half mile west of the city limits.

Oak Hill cemetery is situated between Union and Eastern avenues, north and south of Hall street. The first meeting of Hebrews in this city was held Sept. 20, 1857, to take action in regard to the death of one Jacob Levy, and as a result they purchased that parcel of land which is now the southwest quarter of Oak Hill cemetery. This was the first ground dedicated to such use in that portion of the city, and Oak Hill and Valley City cemeteries were established there two years later. These two cemeteries were originally entirely separate, but about 1903 the dividing line was converted into a beautiful boulevard, with center park and winding drives and walks, artistically connecting the two cemeteries, now known as Oak Hill.

Fair Plains cemetery, situated in the township of Grand Rapids, east of Plainfield avenue, and about a half mile outside the city limits, is one of the beautiful burial places of the city.

Greenwood cemetery is situated north of and adjoining Mt. Calvary. The original purchase was made under the direction of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners, composed of W. P. Mills, W. D. Foster, and Charles P. Babcock, on Feb. 16, 1859. The original area purchased was twenty acres, bought of Daniel Bush and Sophronia Bush, his wife. Other cemeteries are: Garfield Park, situated on Kalamazoo avenue at the corner of the Pere Marquette Railroad; Soldiers' Home, at North Park, and Washington Park, near the city limits on North street and Garfield avenue. Most of the above named cemeteries are fitted with convenient offices, where all arrangements may be made, and there are rest rooms fitted with every convenience. Attendants are ready to minister to the wants of the members of funeral parties, and careful records are kept by the secretaries to do away with any confusion. These are found invaluable in hundreds of cases. Neat graveled walks and in some instances walks of cement are found everywhere, and nearby fountains provide water with which the graves may be watered. Caretakers keep the cemeteries looking like beautiful parks, and the lawns and hedges are carefully clipped. No sign of neglect or carelessness is allowed, and thus the modern cemetery is no longer a tangle of overgrown weeds and grass as it was in years gone by.

## CHAPTER IX.

### GRAND RAPIDS TOWNSHIP

ORIGINAL TERRITORY—ORGANIZATION—THE GUILD FAMILY—OTHER PIONEERS—PHYSICAL FEATURES—EARLY HISTORY OF THE TOWNSHIP—LIST OF SUPERVISORS—VILLAGE OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS.

This township was established by act of the State Legislature, approved March 7, 1834. Its original territory was co-extensive with that portion of Kent County lying south and east of Grand River, as will be seen by the act creating it, but it has since been reduced in size by the formation of other townships and the growth of the city of Grand Rapids, which has persistently encroached upon the original territory of the township. The act creating it gave it the name of Kent, which was changed to Grand Rapids in April, 1842. It was the first township organization effected in Kent County.

The township of Kent (name afterward changed to Grand Rapids) was organized April 4, 1834, the election being held at the house of Joel Guild. This house stood on the present site of the National City Bank, and at that time was the only frame building in the county, except that occupied as a Catholic Church. The officers elected were: Supervisor, Rix Robinson; clerk, Eliphalet Turner; assessors, Joel Guild and Barney Burton; collector, Ira Jones.

The fact that they were the first of the pioneers of the permanent settlement of Grand Rapids by the white people entitles the Guild family to mention in the history of Grand Rapids township, although the site of their residence has long since been included in the domain of the city. But the coming of the Guild family marks the date of the beginning of permanent settlement here. Of Joel Guild's family there were nine—himself and wife, Harriet, Consider, Emily O., Mary L., Olive, Elvira E. and Lucy E., the names of the children being given in the order of their birth. Consider, the only son, lived in or near town until about 1858, when he removed to Georgetown, Ottawa County, where he died in 1883. Emily O. became the wife of Leonard G. Baxter, Mary L. married Robert Barr, Olive married Frederick A. Marsh, and, after his death, Guy S. Walden; Elvira E. became the wife of Albert Baxter, and Lucy E. became the wife of D. S. T. Weller. One of these sons-in-law, Albert Baxter, published a history of Grand Rapids, in 1890, and from those pages is taken the following interesting account of the Guild family:

"Edward Guild came down from Ionia in the spring of 1834, and soon after came another brother, Daniel Guild, and the three, with their relatives by kinship and marriage, constituted a circle of three or four score persons; no inconsiderable share of the little settlement in its beginning. Joel Guild was then a man in the full vigor of middle life, not large, but compact and muscular in build, and of extraordinary exuberance of spirits. He met with an accident—fracture or dislocation of the hip—eighteen months after he came, which caused a limp in his gait; but nothing could damp his jovial good na-



ture, nor his disposition to keep all who were about him in good humor. For more than a quarter of a century it was the custom of that family to meet several times a year at the home of some one of their number, and have, as they were wont to say, 'a jolly good visit,' always freely inviting their neighbors, filling the houses to their full capacity; and there are many still living who remember those reunions as among the most pleasurable of their pioneer experience. Joel Guild had little faculty to accumulate property, or he might have grown rich. He was a stirring, bustling, busy man, but always seemed more to enjoy the spending of money for the entertainment of his family and friends, than its hoarding, or any purely selfish use. He was inquisitive, and better than a pocket almanac for consultation as to the names and whereabouts of the people of this valley, for many years. He seldom met a newcomer without learning quickly all about him. An instance: One cold day a stranger hitched his horse at the gate, and came to the door while the family were at dinner. Mr. Guild pressingly invited him in. No, he could not stop; he wished only to learn where a certain man lived, and the way thither. He was informed, the object of his inquiry being a new settler some ten miles south. This in less than two minutes; but in two minutes more, by a fusilade of adroit questioning, Mr. Guild had learned the man's name, where he came from, where he was going and what he intended to do. The gentleman showed no sign of annoyance, answered pleasantly and briefly, mounted his horse and rode off. As Mr. Guild closed the door, much to the relief of the inmates who had been shivering in the keen wind while he stood there, a guest who had the misfortune to stammer, accosted him with: 'Uncle J-j-j-oel, w-w-why d-d-didn't you ask him out of his b-b-breeches?' Joel Guild was chosen assessor at the first town election here, and was the first supervisor of the town of Paris, where he lived many years, and finally moved back into the city, which was his home when he died, May 26, 1856, aged 68 years."

Eliphalet Turner was the first clerk of the township of Kent (Grand Rapids). He located a little southeast of the present city boundary; but soon moved in, and in 1845-6 built him a home on Front street, near the head of the rapids—the first stone dwelling of note on the west side. He was a mechanic, assisted in erecting a number of the very early buildings on Monroe and Waterloo streets, and was associated with James Scribner in the erection of the first bridge across Grand River here. He was a sturdy yeoman of the old stamp, faithful to all trusts and duties. He died in 1870, aged 78 years.

Barney Burton came to Kent County from Ypsilanti in 1833. He was prominent in the township of Paris, where he improved an excellent farm, yet always seemed identified with Grand Rapids, into which he moved and spent the closing years of his life, a respected, thoroughly upright and conscientious citizen. He was born in Greenfield, Saratoga County, New York, March 16, 1807. He served the public acceptably in official positions.

Ira Jones, who was chosen as the first collector, settled soon thereafter on the west side of the river, near the Indian village, and there resided some forty years.

Grand Rapids, as a whole, may be characterized as decidedly diversified and hilly, but it perhaps contains more than the average amount of farm land to the acre. The soil is of good quality, excepting that in the northeastern part of the township, and great care has been taken by the farmers to cultivate their lands in a proper manner. As a direct result, the township has more well tilled, highly improved farms than almost any other township within the county, considering its size. There are many very commodious and beautifully designed farm houses throughout the township, a number of which are surrounded by large, thrifty trees, the dark green foliage of which adds materially to the beauty of the surroundings.

Grand River flows along the northern and western boundary of the township, and there are but few other small streams, but the territory is well watered with excellent springs. The township is especially adapted to grazing purposes, an industry which receives the careful attention of the provident farmers, with favorable results. Fruit culture is also carried on very profitably, apples being the staple in that line, though peaches and all kinds of small fruits succeed admirably.

The early history of this township has much to do with that of the county, and will be found under that head. The first settler within the present limits of the township was Ezekiel W. Davis, who located on Section 34, in 1834. He also erected the first house. During the same summer Lewis Reed, Ezra Reed, Porter Reed, David S. Leavitt, and Robert M. Barr settled in the township. James McCrath, George Young, and Simeon S. Stewart settled in the year 1836. Robert Thompson, John W. Fisk, and Mathew Taylor settled in the year 1837. Mr. Fisk erected the first hotel, afterward known as the Lake House, near Reed's Lake.

Ezekiel W. Davis lived at first for a little time in a log cabin in the village of Grand Rapids. He planted some corn near the corner of Ottawa and Fountain streets, but later moved to a farm at Reed's Lake, where as before stated he was the first settler. He lived there about thirty years and then moved into the city, where he died in 1873.

Ezra Reed was a most excellent pioneer. He settled by Reed's Lake in 1834, and afterward lived many years in the city; but he died at Muskegon in June, 1888, at the venerable age of 88 years. He was the first sheriff of Kent County, elected in 1836.

Porter Reed came from Ilion, Herkimer County, New York, where he was born, July 11, 1812. He came with his brothers—Ezra and Lewis—in 1834, and his was the first family to locate a home on the shore of Reed's Lake, which is named for him. The brothers also located on government land, each entering a quarter section. Porter Reed cleaned up a fine farm, which was subsequently divided among his four children. He died in 1857.

James McCrath was a native of Scotland, born in February, 1808, and he came to the United States in early manhood. He was a stone cutter and stone mason, and after coming to America worked in Massachusetts and Detroit, Mich., until 1836, when he came to Grand Rapids with a party of other masons to lay the foundation for the Sweet grist mill, the first erected in the city and which stood on



the present site of Berkey & Gay's furniture factory. He worked here that summer and then returned to Detroit, married, and moved to Lapeer County, where he resided until 1842, then returned to Grand Rapids and resided in the city until 1850, when he settled on a farm in Grand Rapids township, three miles east of Division street, on East Bridge street, and comprising 100 acres. He did not engage in practical farming himself, but hired the work done and continued to follow his trade for twenty years, helping build St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the old Dutch Reformed Church at the corner of Bridge and Ottawa streets, and other stone buildings. He served for a number of years as highway commissioner. His death occurred at his homestead in Grand Rapids township, Oct. 10, 1897.

George Young was a thoroughly just and companionable citizen, influential in the organization and support of the First Reformed Church, giving liberally of his means, in 1842, to the erection of their first house of worship at the corner of Bridge and Ottawa streets, originally a stone building, which was destroyed by fire in April, 1872, and the site has since been used for business purposes. Mr. Young settled here in 1836. He lived a little outside the village, but his interests and feelings were so closely interwoven with those of its citizens as to make him practically one of them. His ancestors were from the Netherlands and settled at an early day on the Hudson River, near Albany. He was largely instrumental in procuring the settlement of the Holland colony in Ottawa County in 1847. He was 71 years of age at the time of his death, in 1870.

Simeon S. Stewart was one of the comers of the spring of 1836. With a span of horses and wagon he drove through from Detroit, bringing his family and household goods and \$1,800 in cash. He settled on the north side of Bridge street (now Michigan Ave., N. W.) and lived in a slab house a little below Ottawa street. Slab shanties were among the makeshifts for dwellings in many instances before other sawed lumber became plenty. Mr. Stewart was a mason by trade, did some of the earliest stone work, and made lime for it. After about ten years he moved to a farm a few miles out on the Cascade road, where he spent the remainder of his life.

John W. Fisk was born in Southington, Hartford County, Connecticut. He came to Plymouth, Wayne County, Michigan, in 1835, and there conducted a hotel two years, after which he engaged in the same business at Ada, Kent County, one year. He then came to Grand Rapids and bought of Lucius Lyon 200 acres of land near Reed's Lake and upon which he erected a hotel, which he managed for more than twenty-five years.

At the time of the organization of the township, and for several years thereafter, the taxes were collected by the collector, paid over to the supervisor and disbursed by him. In 1839 a treasurer was elected. The first entry on his book reads as follows: "May 14, 1839, received of E. W. Davis, supervisor, eight dollars, on the Grand River Bank. Three dollars on the Ypsilanti Bank, one dollar and twenty-five cents on the Bank of Pontiac, and sixty-two cents in specie." Amount of taxes collected the year previous, \$174. This included all the taxes collected in what is now Grand Rapids town and city, Ada and Paris.



Herewith is given a list of the supervisors of Grand Rapids township from its organization down to the present time: 1834, Rix Robinson; 1836, Ezekiel W. Davis; 1839, William G. Henry; 1840, Francis J. Higginson; 1841, George Young; 1842, John Almy; 1844, Josiah L. Wheeler; 1845, Truman H. Lyon; 1846, Daniel Ball; 1847, Harvey K. Rose; 1848, James M. Nelson; 1849, Aaron Dikeman; 1850, Lewis Reed; 1851, Foster Tucker; 1853, Abram Shear; 1854, Foster Tucker; 1855, Lewis Reed; 1856, Foster Tucker; 1857, George W. Dickinson; 1858, Augustus Treat; 1859, Kendall Woodward; 1860, Obed H. Foote; 1861, Foster Tucker; 1874, Henry F. McCormick; 1883, Henry H. Havens; 1892, Henry O. Braman; 1893, Henry H. Havens; 1894, Louis Goudzwaard; 1895, Walter C. McCrath; 1897, Louis Goudzwaard; 1899, Walter C. McCrath; 1902, John Paul; 1905, Thomas E. Reed; 1910, H. O. Braman; 1911, Louis Goudzwaard; 1913, John Paul; 1915, Louis Goudzwaard; 1916, William H. Stokes, present incumbent.

William G. Henry came to Grand Rapids in 1836, and in addition to serving as supervisor of the township he was the second village treasurer, a druggist, and an enterprising citizen. He moved to Detroit about 1865.

Francis J. Higginson was a physician, and he was the fifth gentleman of that profession to locate in Grand Rapids. He came in 1839. He was a New England man, a graduate of the medical department of Harvard University and had practiced at Cambridge, Mass. He remained in Grand Rapids only about two years; removed in 1841 to Brattleboro, Vt., where he practiced many years and where he died.

Daniel Ball, for more than twenty years, beginning in the early village days, was a man of tireless activity in many business lines. In trade as a merchant, and in storage and forwarding; in steamboat building and navigation enterprises; in manufacturing; in real estate dealings and improvements, and in banking, he usually kept himself loaded with as much labor and responsibility as three or four ordinary men should carry. He had great tenacity of purpose, as well as energy and industry, and knew no such thing as discouragement so long as his health permitted him to keep upon his feet. He began business in Michigan at Owosso; came here about 1841, and removed to New York in 1863, leaving here many germs of his planting for the great progress which Grand Rapids has made.

Kendall Woodward, who came here in 1836, was a mechanic, an architect and builder, and was in trade for some years near the foot of Pearl and Monroe streets. He died while as yet comparatively young.

Thomas E. Reed was born on the old pioneer farm of his father, Porter Reed, near Reed's Lake, May 4, 1847. He was educated in the district schools and always followed farming as an occupation. He served gallantly in the Union army during the Civil War as a member of Company B, Twenty-first Michigan infantry, and was seriously wounded in the battle of Bentonville, N. C. Mr. Reed served as justice of the peace for three years, town treasurer several years, village president three years, and from 1905 to 1910 was supervisor of Grand Rapids township. He died July 25, 1911.



The village of East Grand Rapids is situated on the bank of Reed's Lake, but a few miles from the city of Grand Rapids. This village began its growth with the opening of the street railway connecting the city and Reed's Lake, some forty years ago. Its growth was rapid, but not good. Road houses, low grade amusements, such as chicken and dog fights, fake boxing matches and occasionally a real battle for blood and thunder were staged and the promoters flourished amazingly. The authorities did not interfere nor try to restrict the disreputable business. In 1890 Edward M. Barnard, who resided near Reed's Lake, was elected a member of the State House of Representatives and took his seat at Lansing in the month of January following. From time to time he discussed the intolerable conditions in the civic life of the lake region with Senator Doran, Representatives Hayward, Fitch and White, his colleagues, and finally it was decided to introduce a bill providing for the organization of a village government at the lake, to be known as East Grand Rapids. The entire lake frontage and large tracts of farming land were embraced in the boundaries of the village, and the bill in due time passed and received the approval of the Governor. The purposes of the enactment were realized, for under the operations of the village charter the community cleaned out the road houses, the disreputable amusement places and put a stop to chicken disputes, dog and man fights. The village grew rapidly in population and it is now regarded as the most desirable suburb of the city. At the present writing (1917) there is a movement under way to bring about the annexation of the village to the city of Grand Rapids, and this will doubtless be consummated at no distant day.

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## CHAPTER X.

### BYRON TOWNSHIP

LOCATION—WATER COURSES — PHYSICAL FEATURES — SETTLEMENT—  
JERRY AND WILLIAM BOYNTON—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING—  
LIST OF SUPERVISORS—PERSONAL MENTION.

The township of Byron is situated in the extreme southwestern part of Kent County, with Wyoming on the north, Gaines on the east, Allegan County on the south and Ottawa County on the west.

The township is well watered by Buck and Rush Creeks and the springs and numerous small streams that form these creeks. One branch of Buck Creek rises in the extreme southeastern corner of the township, flows a northwesterly direction for some distance, and then north by east until it leaves the town on its northern limits at the center line of Section 1. Another branch rises in Allegan County and flows northeasterly through what was formerly known as the "big swamp" until it forms a junction with the main stream. About the center of Section 26 is a small lake called "Mud Lake." Rush Creek rises near the center of the township and flows in a northwesterly direction, leaving Byron very near its northwestern limits. Other and smaller streams flow through the township, and these different water courses render it, as before stated, a well watered region.

The surface of the township of Byron is rolling, being covered with gently rolling swells and small knolls, with the exception of what was originally a swamp which commences on Section 13 and extends in a southwesterly direction into Allegan County. This swamp, now largely brought under cultivation by careful drainage, varied from eighty rods to one mile in width, and was mostly timbered with tamarack and cedar. The extreme southwestern part of the township is somewhat broken, but not enough to injure its value for farming purposes. The soil varies from argillaceous to sandy, but is what is generally known to farmers as either clayey or sandy loam. The surface of some of the creek bottoms is underlaid with marl or "bog lime," while the "big swamp" was formerly a bed of muck, in many places of several feet in thickness. On Section 21 was a small swamp timbered with tamarack through which the track of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad passes, which several times sank so as to engulf the road bed. This swamp is probably the site of a lake which became covered with a covering of vegetable matter of sufficient thickness to support trees of from 50 to 60 feet in height. The township was originally heavily timbered with maple, oak, walnut, ash, whitewood, etc., from which large amounts of timber have been taken. By large outlays in drainage, the lands have been made fertile and are constantly improving. The township was originally one of the finest hunting grounds in the county. Game of all kinds known in the country was here to be found in almost exhaustless supply. The heavy growth of timber afforded ample cover and protection, and many are the "bear stories" and daring feats of frontier life remembered of the early pioneers of Byron. They were brought in daily contact with bears, wolves, and wild-cats, and these were formidable enemies to the young domestic animals about the settlers' cabins, as well as dangerous neighbors in the lonely wilderness. Deer and grouse were also to be found in great numbers, and these, with an occasional "bear steak," furnished the principal meat supply, to which the epicurean of today would have no reason to object. Venomous reptiles, and especially the dreaded rattlesnake, were among the enemies of modern civilization, and they added their share of the discomforts and perils of pioneer life.

The settlement of the township began under the same discouraging circumstances which prevailed everywhere in districts remote from the natural thoroughfares. The meager supplies of actual necessities had to be brought long distances, through trackless forests, infested with dangerous opponents of civilization. The pack-horse was the faithful friend who was the means of connecting the pioneers with the outside world, carrying to them the few articles of commerce which this simple mode of living demanded. Ammunition, meal, and salt were the three articles most required, but the first was always an absolute necessity. The periodical trips to the "base of supplies" were always fraught with peril, both to the lonely travelers who made them and to the helpless and defenseless ones who were left behind. Several days were required to go to Grand Haven, or even Grand Rapids, and return with a cargo of supplies.

Let us go back for a space of eighty-two years, to the Summer of 1836. Byron was then an unbroken wilderness. The ruthless hand of the white man, armed with that terribly destructive weapon, the



axe, had never been laid on nature's beautiful forest that crowned the hills and shaded the vales. As the God of nature created it so the grand old forest stood. But the axe, the pioneer's great weapon, as honored as his rifle, was soon destined to be heard in its depths. The first settler of the township was Nathan Boynton, who, in the summer of 1836, located a farm on Section 5 and selected a place to build a house on a little knoll near the banks of Rush Creek. Mr. Boynton returned to Grandville and was taken ill, but in August or September sent his brothers, William and Jerry Boynton, to build a house for him. All the guide they had was the section line. This they followed until they came to the line between the present townships of Byron and Wyoming, where they, not knowing that there was a variation of the section lines of the different ranges of townships, lost the line and were some time finding the place Nathan had selected for his dwelling. Having found the spot they went to work to erect a house. Here is the description of the house as given to a former writer by William Boynton: It was built of small logs, such as they could carry and put up; the roof was of small basswood, split in two parts and gutters cut, with an axe, in the flat side. One tier of these was laid with the flat side up and the other with the flat side down, so that the outside edge of the upper tier fitted into the gutter of the lower. The floor and door of the house were made of plank, or as woodsmen usually call them, "puncheons," split from basswood trees. The fireplace was built of clay, which Mr. Boynton related he mixed by treading with his bare feet, and it was built up with small twigs, while the chimney was built of split sticks laid up in the same kind of mortar. This fireplace and chimney were used and did good service for a goodly number of years. Such was the first house erected in the township of Byron.

Jerry and William Boynton soon located farms on Sections 9 and 8, respectively, and commenced improving their homesteads, which by their skill and energy were rendered both attractive and productive. The Boyntons were uncles of James A. Garfield, late President of the United States, and they came from St. Lawrence County, New York. Jerry added to his landed possessions until, at the time of his death, Nov. 24, 1871, he owned 320 acres. On his arrival in the township he had only \$50, sufficient to buy forty acres of land, which he at once began to reclaim from its original condition, and he worked by the day as opportunity offered. His wife taught the first school in the township, in 1840. The building was constructed temporarily of boards for the purpose and it was located in the northwest quarter of Section 5. She had fourteen pupils. William Boynton was eighteen years of age when he came here, in 1836, and he walked from Detroit to the home of his brother Nathan. He arrived, worn out with fatigue, and with one shilling in his possession. As a pioneer he met courageously all the exigencies common to that condition. He was at one time obliged to go eight miles to cradle grain and split rails at 25 cents or one pound of pork per hundred. Once when returning homeward with some pork, he was followed by wolves. Arriving within a mile of home, he was completely exhausted and threw the meat to his pursuers. His wife heard the cries of the animals and, coming to his aid, succeeded in getting him home. At another time



he had a single-handed encounter with three bears, and fortunately was victorious.

In 1837 John Harmon settled on Section 9, and during the same year Harmon Kellogg settled on Section 3 and James B. Jewell on Section 9. Harmon Kellogg was born in Watertown, Litchfield County, Connecticut, Feb. 7, 1808. In 1812 his parents removed to Florence, N. Y., where he remained until he came to Michigan to be a pioneer of Byron township.

It seems that there were no new settlers in the township in 1838, except Edla Judson, who in that year settled on Section 8. Mr. Judson was born near Cleveland, Ohio, about 1809. He was a very industrious youth and began his business life as a poor boy in Cuyahoga County, from whence in early manhood he walked to Michigan. He reached Grand Rapids when it was an insignificant hamlet, with but one log house. He worked for Jonathan F. Chubb on a farm for some time, and in 1837 located eighty acres of government land in Byron township, upon which he took up his residence the following year. The land was purely virgin, as not a stick of timber had ever been cut from it, and the first habitation occupied there by Mr. Judson was a primitive log cabin, usual in those days. When he built this log cabin he had to go a distance of four miles for men to help "raise" and he only had eight men at that. He resided on this homestead until his death, Oct. 22, 1873.

In 1839 Larkin Ball settled on Section 20, at which time he was the only man south of the center of the township. Soon afterward, Peter Goldin settled on the same section. It is said that four men cut the logs, carried them, and raised Mr. Goldin's house, and this house was standing as late as 1859. In this year Eli Crossett settled on Section 17; also Amelek Taylor on the same section, Alden Curnburn on Section 7, and Benjamin Robinson on Section 6. In 1840 there was but one new settler in the township, William Olmstead, who settled on Section 8. The year 1841 went by without any augmentation of the numbers of this sturdy band of pioneers, but in 1842 Samuel Hubbel settled on Section 28, Joseph Gallup on Section 32, and Henry A. Vannest on Section 5. It is said that when they "raised" a house for one of these gentlemen they did not get it up the first day, and it was so far to go home that they stayed and camped out over night, and finished "raising" the next day. And all they had for supper and breakfast was roast potatoes.

In the year 1843 a Mr. Fox was the only man who settled in the "South Woods." Oliver Harris settled on Section 14 about this time, but the exact date is uncertain.

In 1844 Ezekiel Cook settled on Section 35, a Mr. Tuft on Section 23, and E. R. Ide and James K. McKenney on Section 20. Mrs. Cook told an earlier writer that when they moved into the woods they had no neighbors nearer than four miles, they being the first to settle in the southeast part of the township. And their nearest postoffice was at Grand Rapids, a distance of fourteen miles through an unbroken wilderness. The Tufts moved on their place, Dec. 31, 1843, and all the signs of a house they had was a small sled load of lumber.

James K. McKenney was born Aug. 6, 1806, four miles from the mouth of the Niagara River, in Canada. In 1811 his family removed



to Niagara, N. Y., and ten years later to Monroe County, that State. At the age of twenty-one years Mr. McKenney purchased seventy-five acres of land in the town of Greece, Monroe County, New York, and after paying for it engaged in the mercantile business, which proved a fatal disaster to his finances. He again turned his attention to agriculture, and in the fall of 1844 came to Byron township. Arriving at Grand Rapids, with his wife and four children and \$115, he purchased through John Ball eighty acres for \$60 and forty more for \$22. Mr. McKenney experienced all the exigencies of pioneer life. He carried his grists of corn and wheat two miles on his back, and single-handed cleared eighty-seven acres of land. His first work was to build a small log house, and when it was near completion, with the spaces cut for doors and windows, a fall of two feet of snow occurred. At the time he was crippled by an enormous carbuncle on his knee, and in the unfinished abode he lived with his wife and four children, scarcely able to procure the necessary fuel; and meantime the cooking was done out of doors. In six or seven years he bought a team and hauled the first load of timothy hay ever drawn to Grand Rapids, also the first green peas. Mr. McKenney served his township some five years as highway commissioner.

In the year 1845 Corkins Barney, Clark S. Wilson, and William Davidson settled within the limits of the township. Among the early settlers whose names have been procured are Josiah R. Holden, Bradley Weaver, Daniel Prindle, Carlos Weaver, and Prentiss Weaver, who settled in Byron from 1846 to 1849.

Josiah Rhodes Holden was born in New Hampshire in 1797. In early manhood he took up his residence in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, later moved from there to Illinois, and after various shiftings, incident to "wild-cat" times and business failures, finally became a settler in the "South Woods," as Byron township was familiarly called, the date of his settlement being Nov. 18, 1845. He continued to reside there until his death, in 1887. He was the father of Ebenezer G. D. Holden, long a prominent attorney in Grand Rapids and twice secretary of the State of Michigan.

Prentiss Weaver was born in Tolland, Conn., March 16, 1825. His father purchased a farm in Geneseo County, New York, when Prentiss was three years old, and there he remained until the age of twenty-two. In the fall of 1847 he located eighty acres of land on Section 34, in Byron township, then went back to New York and returned to Byron in the spring of 1849. His land was covered with the unbroken forest and he cleared a place for a log house. He remained an honored citizen of Byron until his death.

In 1850-51 Eli Young and James M. Barney settled on Section 32. About this time was long famous among the old settlers as the "wolf year." Mr. Young killed one within four rods of his door, with his dog and corn cutter. William Boynton told an earlier writer that frequently, before this time, however, when he was obliged to work at Grandville to get provision for the support of his family, he would work all day, get the proceeds of labor in provisions, and at dark start for home, a distance of about five miles, through the woods, while the wolves were howling all around him and sometimes coming almost within reach of the good, stout cudgel which he carried.



James M. Barney was a native of Scotland, born about 1820. He was a brick-maker by trade, and for a number of years after coming to America lived in Wayne County, Michigan, where, when a young man, he manufactured all the bricks used in the construction of the court house. He later became a farmer and, in 1852, located in Byron township, where he spent the remainder of his life. During the first summer that he lived on his place he had to keep his cow and calf in a high log pen near his house, nights, to keep them from the wolves. One night, after being kept awake until almost morning, he took his gun just at daylight and sallied forth, determined on vengeance. When he went out the wolves retreated for a short distance. But when he came into a thicket of bushes they surrounded him, and he backed up against a tree, where they kept him for about two hours, until broad daylight. He shot at them several times, but the bushes were so thick that he did not kill any, although they would come so near that he could hear them snap at each other. The wolves were never very thick after this season, and as they decreased, until about 1856, deer increased and became very thick. Mr. Barney has left on record the fact that he had during one winter from forty to fifty deer hung up in the woods at one time.

For the first few years the settlement of Byron progressed very slowly. It required a brave heart and a strong arm to encounter the dangers and hardships consequent to the opening up of a new and heavily timbered country. But gradually the forest yielded to the axe of the pioneer; beautiful fields, thrifty orchards, comfortable dwellings, and well filled barns took the place of the little log cabin and unbroken forest. Byron is now one of the foremost agricultural townships in Kent County. With a varied soil, adapted to nearly all of the different branches of husbandry, and especially to fruit growing, and the very best facilities for marketing its produce, its farmers stand among the best.

The first township meeting (the township of Byron then embracing Wyoming also) was held at the house of Charles H. Oaks, in Grandville, on Monday, May 2, 1836. The following officers were chosen: Supervisor, Gideon H. Gordon; township clerk, Isaac A. Allen; assessors, Eli Yeomans, Ephraim P. Walker and Justin Brooks; justices of the peace, Gideon H. Gordon, Robert Howlett and Ephraim P. Walker; collector, Lorenzo French; commissioners of highways, Gideon H. Gordon, Eli Yeomans and H. Pitts; commissioners of schools, Joseph B. Copeland, Sanford Buskirk and James Lockwood; school inspectors, Gideon H. Gordon, Isaac A. Allen and Eli Yeomans; overseers of the poor, Ephraim P. Walker and Justin Brooks; constables, Lorenzo French and Sanford Buskirk. As this election was held on May 2, 1836, and the first settlement in the present township of Byron was not made until August of that year, it follows that these first township officers had their residence in what is now the township of Wyoming. The complete list of supervisors of Byron township down to the date of this publication is as follows: 1836, Gideon H. Gordon; 1837, George W. Scranton; 1838, Julius C. Abel; 1839, Robert Howlett; 1842, W. R. Godwin; 1844, Eli P. Crossett; 1845, W. R. Godwin; 1848, Elijah McKenney; 1850, Jerry Boynton; 1851, James M. Pelton; 1855, Amos B. Smith; 1856, James M. Pelton; 1861, S. S. Towner; 1862, James M. Pelton; 1864, Loyal Pal-



mer; 1867, William P. Whitney; 1875, Samuel Tobey; 1878, William P. Whitney; 1879, Samuel Tobey; 1883, Byron McNeal; 1888, James S. Toland; 1889, Moses Rosenberg; 1894, James Toland; 1897, Wallace C. Weaver; 1901, Washington Judson; 1903, Wallace C. Weaver; 1904, Charles Ball; 1907, Washington Judson; 1908, Wallace C. Weaver; 1912, Jerome Weaver; 1913, Charles H. Gilbert; 1915, Wallace C. Weaver, present incumbent.

Elijah McKenney was born at Newfane, Niagara County, New York, Sept. 4, 1812. In the spring of 1846 he came to Byron township and purchased eighty acres of land in Section 20. He arrived in Byron with his household furniture and \$65 in money. Seventy dollars being the price of the land, he disposed of an extra pair of boots for \$5 and paid the amount demanded. He cut a small clearing for a log house, in which he commenced pioneer life. He traded his overcoat for a cow and a hog that weighed 200 pounds when fatted. The next spring he purchased a pair of calves and raised his first team. He cleared fifteen acres, unaided. He served as supervisor of Byron township two years and as justice of the peace one year.

Samuel S. Towner was born at Willsborough, Essex County, New York, March 4, 1821. He was reared on a farm and at twenty-three years of age went to Cleveland, Ohio, where he engaged four seasons as a ship carpenter. In the fall of 1852 he came to Byron Center and acquired by purchase 160 acres of land in Section 21, giving his personal attention to its improvement. In the fall of 1871 he built a steam saw-mill at Byron Center, with an engine of 30 horsepower and upright saw, and engaged in the manufacture of lumber for the Widdicomb Furniture Company of Grand Rapids. In the fall of 1880 he built a grist mill with four sets of burr stones. He did a considerable amount of custom work and manufactured his own brand of flour for the Grand Rapids market. Mr. Towner enlisted for service in the Civil War, March 6, 1865, joining Company C, Tenth Michigan cavalry. He served in the Army of the Cumberland and was discharged Nov. 21, 1865, at Jackson, Tennessee. He served as supervisor and also filled other local offices.

Byron McNeal was born in Ridgeville, Lorain County, Ohio, Oct. 13, 1838. He continued in the vocation of his father (farming) until Aug. 3, 1862, when he enlisted at Elyria in Company H, One Hundred and Third Ohio infantry, and served in the Twenty-third army corps, Army of the Tennessee, until July 4, 1865. He was engaged in the siege of Knoxville and the battle of Resaca, Ga., where he was wounded in the left foot, May 14, 1864. He was sent to the field hospital, thence to Chattanooga, Nashville, Louisville, and finally to Camp Denison, where he was detailed to transfer prisoners. On being discharged, he returned to Ridgeville and engaged in farming two years, and then went to Elyria and prosecuted mercantile business five years. In 1876 he came to Byron Center and purchased the store of William B. Crabtree, a general stock of merchandise, including groceries, drugs, dry goods, agricultural implements, etc. He lost the stock and building by fire, Jan. 2, 1878, but the following year he erected a new building and continued the business. In January, 1881, he was appointed postmaster and filled that position a number of years, and also served as supervisor.



Moses Rosenberg was born in Oxford County, Ontario, Canada, Feb. 12, 1847. He was but four years of age when brought to Kent County by his parents, and he did much toward clearing away the forests and in fitting the land for civilized life. He was educated in the common schools and began the task of making a livelihood for himself at the early age of fourteen years, at a compensation of \$72 per annum. On Feb. 5, 1864, he enlisted at Grand Rapids in Company G, Twenty-first Michigan infantry, and was assigned to the Army of the Tennessee. At the siege of Savannah he was taken ill and was confined in hospital two months, then rejoined his regiment at Goldsboro, N. C., and was present at the surrender of Johnston. He served his country faithfully for eighteen months, and was mustered out at Detroit, receiving an honorable discharge Aug. 28, 1865, and then returned home to resume the peaceful pursuit of agriculture. In 1888 he was elected supervisor of Byron township and was re-elected to that position consecutively five times.

Washington Judson was born in Byron township Dec. 14, 1844. He received his education in the little frame schoolhouse, known as No. 2. The first log schoolhouse, No. 1, in the township of Byron, had a row of windows in one end, and the seats were slabs, with pegs for legs. No. 2 was the pride of the township, yet its methods were primitive, and the birchen rod and dunce-block were among its appliances. Some of the early pioneer amusements consisted of taffy-pulling, apple parings, log rollings, etc., and concluded with a dance, such as the Virginia reel, fisher's horn-pipe, and so on. Mr. Judson began working out at the age of fourteen years at \$7 per month. He became an expert shingle packer and spent about seven years in the shingle and lumber mills of Ottawa County. He was elected supervisor of Byron township in 1901, was re-elected in 1902 and again in 1907, serving three terms.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### ADA TOWNSHIP

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES—PHYSICAL FEATURES—VILLAGE OF ADA—  
FIRST SETTLER—RIX ROBINSON—ORGANIZATION—FIRST OFFICERS  
—LIST OF SUPERVISERS.

This is one of the four most centrally located townships in Kent County, the townships of Cannon, Grand Rapids and Plainfield being the others. It is bounded on the north by Cannon, on the east by Vergennes, on the south by Cascade, and on the west by Grand Rapids. It is said that it was named in honor of a highly respected young lady, Ada Smith, who then resided in the township. The records of the township are not in existence previously to the year 1838, and this must have been about the date of its organization. Its boundaries are four straight lines, and territorially it is an exact Congressional township, containing thirty-six sections of land. The land is what is usually termed "oak openings" and as fertile perhaps as any other portion of the county, being generally very productive. It was originally a fair alternation of openings and heavy timber, and the soil is



sandy, being well adapted to fruit culture. The valleys of the Grand and Thornapple Rivers are not extremely wide, and the general topography of other portions of the township might be described as level or gently undulating. There is some excellent land, with fine farms and improvements, and it can be said that Ada is a specially rich and valuable territory. The Grand River divides the township into unequal parts, following from southeast to northwest, and Thornapple River comes up from the south to deposit its water into the main channel of the Grand. In the pioneer days Thornapple was considered of sufficient magnitude to afford water power for the early mills, and it probably derives its name from the plentiful supply of thornapples which grew upon its banks. There are a number of spring brooks which are tributaries of the two rivers, and these afford the drainage and water supply of the township.

The Grand Trunk Railroad traverses Ada, and besides being within a reasonable distance of the city of Grand Rapids, there is the village of Ada. Ample shipping facilities are thus afforded, and the railroad accommodations are superior to most other rural districts in the county. The country is traversed by well kept roads, which add to the comfort and convenience of interior travel. The village of Ada is a shipping and trading point of importance and convenience to a large farming community. The agricultural interests of the township are varied and extensive, stock raising and fruit culture being profitable accessories to the raising of grain and vegetables. Much land is devoted to grazing uses, to which it is admirably adapted, by reason of the abundance of pure water, and successful growing of all kinds of grasses. In an early day this locality was especially valued as a hunting ground, game of all kinds being found here in great abundance.

The first settler of this township was Rix Robinson. For a long time he was engaged in the fur trade with the Indians on Grand River. Alone he traversed the forests, and "paddled his own canoe," surrounded with savages by nature—and sometimes by deed—but he remained unmolested by them. The spirit of the natives had already been somewhat subdued by the influence of Christianity, and itinerant missionaries were then laboring among them. A tribe of these Indians remained on Sections 6 and 7 of the present township of Ada until about the year 1860, when they sold their lands and removed to Pentwater. During the latter years of their residence on these lands they cultivated the soil, built comfortable dwellings, had well organized schools and very good churches. They were of the Roman Catholic faith. Mr. Robinson, or "Uncle Rix," as he was familiarly called, during his sojourn and life among the Indians, became quite attached to them; so much so that he chose one of their daughters as his partner for life. A son was born to them, and he became well known throughout Grand River Valley and western Michigan as an energetic business man.

The experience of the pioneers of Ada was similar to that of other townships; they worked hard, they endured much, and they enjoyed much. They lived a noble life, although it was a life perhaps few of us would choose. And they did a good work. Every stroke of their pioneer axe sounded a note in the song of a "thousand years."



Among the early settlers of Ada, in addition to the one we have already mentioned, may be named Edward Robinson, who settled in 1830; Tory Smith, Jedediah Riggs and Edward Pettis, in 1836-7; Peter McLean, R. G. Chaffee, Hezekiah Howell, E. McCormick, P. Fingleton, Gurden Chapel, John Findlay and J. S. Schenck, 1840 to 1845.

Tory Smith, one of that noble band of pioneers who were among the founders of Kent County, was born in Burlington, Vt., Nov. 12, 1798. In 1832 he removed to near Rochester, N. Y., where he followed farming, and for two years carried the mail from Rochester over the noted Ridge road. In the autumn of 1837 he came with his brother, Sydney Smith, to Ada, Kent County. He entered fifty acres on Section 35 and subsequently forty acres more. He owned an interest in and conducted a ferry across the Thornapple until the bridge was built. Mr. Smith died Oct. 6, 1870, after a long life of usefulness.

Jedediah Riggs was a native of Connecticut, born July 8, 1776. He came to Michigan in 1835 and entered 160 acres of land in Jackson County. In April, 1837, he came to Ada and entered eighty acres of land, his being the fifth family to settle in Ada, east of the Grand River. He died in August, 1868.

Edward Pettis was born in Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, Jan. 5, 1818. In 1826 he came with his brother-in-law, Horace Lathrop, to Oakland County, and in 1836 to Ionia County. In April, 1837, he pre-empted 104 acres on Section 6. He disposed of this tract in 1842 and in June of that year purchased 105 acres, which he increased by subsequent purchases to nearly 400 acres of well improved land. At this period there were no roads and no bridges, and the only available grist-mill was at Grand Rapids. One notable occasion is related. Mr. Pettis left home with his wife, mother-in-law and twenty-five bushels of buckwheat, and drove his ox-team to Grand River, where he kept a canoe. He ferried the women and buckwheat across, compelled the oxen to swim over, and, returning, dissected his wagon and carried the pieces in his canoe to the opposite shore, where he reconstructed his train and proceeded. The return process was the same and three days were consumed in the trip. Mr. Pettis aided in building the first church and schoolhouse and roads; he piloted the first boat from Grand Rapids to Grand Haven and, in 1847-8, assisted in the subdivision of twenty-two townships in Oceana, Newaygo and Manistee Counties. He also lumbered on the Flat River about fifteen years.

Peter McLean was born in Caledonia, Livingston County, New York, Dec. 11, 1815. He was reared on a farm and attended school in the pioneer log schoolhouses. Though the advantages were meager his diligent application fitted him for a teacher, in which vocation he spent fourteen successful years. In 1836 he went to the island of Put-in-Bay, in Lake Erie, where he helped build the first frame house and barn, and six months afterward returned to New York. In May, 1838, he came to Jackson County and in February, 1843, "took up" 160 acres of State land on Section 13 in Ada township. Almost the entire face of the country was covered with woods, settlements were "few and far between," and the Indians who had a village on Section 1 were still numerous. Mr. McLean was a factor in all the early improvements of the township and took his share of the hardships of



the first settler. He served as a member of the Board of Supervisors sixteen years and as a justice of the peace eight years.

Patrick Fingleton was a native of Ireland, born in the year 1800. In 1844 he crossed to America and settled in the State of Michigan. For twenty-four years he was engaged in farming in Ada township, and he died in 1868.

Gurden Chapel was a native of New York State, but removed to Canada, as he was probably of English descent. He came to Michigan in middle age and first located in Oakland County, but later in Kent County, and he died at Ada in 1876, at the age of eighty years.

Jacob S. Schenck was born in Potter, Yates County, New York, May 17, 1819. In October, 1845, he purchased 200 acres in Ada township, paying therefor \$1,000, and on this he located in the spring of 1848. His land was covered with woods—there were fifty acres cleared and a log house and barn had been built—but, with Mr. Schenck's untiring industry and well directed energy, it was converted into beautiful fields.

The township was organized April 2, 1838. The first election was held on the date above given, at the house of J. W. Fisk. Edward Robinson was moderator, and Peter Teeple was clerk of the election. Officers were elected as follows: Supervisor, Sidney Smith; township clerk, Nelson Robinson; assessors, Rix Robinson, Hamilton Andrews and Peter Teeple; collector, Carlos Smith; overseers of the poor, Tory Smith and Miniers Jipson; commissioners of highways, William Slosson, Edward Robinson and Lewis Cook; constables, Carlos Smith, Rix R. Church and Michael Early; commissioners of schools, Nelson Robinson, George Teeple and Lewis Cook. A complete list of the supervisors of Ada township is as follows: 1838, Sidney Smith; 1841, Rix Robinson; 1842, Norman Ackley; 1843, Sidney Smith; 1844, Rix Robinson; 1845, Amos Chase; 1846, Nelson Robinson; January to April, 1853, Emory F. Strong; 1853, Gurden Chapel; 1854, John H. Withey; 1857, Peter McLean; 1859, Moses O. Swartout; 1860, Peter McLean; 1866, William H. Mekeel; 1867, Hiram A. Rhodes; 1868, Peter McLean; 1870, John T. Headley; 1871, Peter McLean; 1875, Rudolphus G. Chaffee; 1877, John T. Headley; 1878, Peter McLean; 1879, John T. Headley; 1881, Peter McLean; 1882, Walter S. Plumb; 1885, John T. Headley; 1887, E. B. Clements; 1888, John T. Headley; 1889, Edward B. Clements; 1892, Lucius C. Warner; 1894, James H. Ward; 1895, Edward B. Clements; 1896, James H. Ward; 1908, Patrick J. McCormick; 1911, James H. Ward, present incumbent.

Amos Chase came from New York to Lenawee County, Michigan, in 1842, but the following year returned to his Empire State home. In June of the same year, however, he came to Kent County and entered all of Section 10 of Ada township and thirty acres of Section 11, besides eighty acres of Section 36 in Cannon township. He was quite prominent among the pioneers.

William H. McKeel was born in Philips, Putnam County, New York, Jan. 31, 1831. When twenty-one years old he engaged in cutting ship timber in York State, and this business he followed the most of his life. In 1854 he came to Kent County. In 1857 he made a second trip here and bought a farm of 100 acres on Section 29



in Ada township. He lived there two years and then returned to New York, but in 1860 he moved to Ada the second time and thereafter made it his home.

John T. Headley was born in Sussex County, New Jersey, Oct. 6, 1822. He grew to manhood in Steuben County, New York, and in 1862 came to Michigan, buying land in Cascade township, but three years later located in Ada. He pursued farming in the summers and attended to his lumbering interests during the winter seasons.

The various industries of commerce and manufacture were early established and prosecuted with intelligence and success. The first grist mill erected in the township was on Section 24, by H. H. Ives and Robert L. Shoemaker. Many of the present-day citizens and men of affairs are the sons of the early pioneer settlers, who have left their impress upon the succeeding generations, and the people are generally well-to-do and progressive.

The first school house was at Ada. In 1854 the second school house was built near where stands the school house of Ada today. It was a very convenient structure, and Moses Everett, then recently from New York, a teacher by profession, was first placed in charge. About 1870, the second house having become too small to accommodate the rising village, a brick house was built and the school opened in it. This was succeeded by the present graded school building. At present the district schools of the township are in keeping with the high standard of excellence maintained throughout the county.

Ada village was laid out into lots by Dalrymple & Dunn when the Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad was built, about the year 1858; and although one or more additional plats were made its growth has seemed to be quite slow. It is located on Sections 33 and 34, near the confluence of the Thornapple and Grand Rivers, ten miles by the railroad from the city of Grand Rapids. It possesses a tolerably good water power, which has never been fully improved. A good grist mill appears to be doing a good business, its proprietor being John Becker. The village also contains a good school house, hotel, one drug store, three grocery stores and several other establishments. Its church needs are supplied by the Christian Reformed, Congregational and Dutch Reformed denominations.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP

TOPOGRAPHY AND WATERCOURSES—GEORGE MILLER, THE FIRST SETTLER—OTHER PIONEERS—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING—ZENAS G. WINSOR—EARLY MILLS—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

Topographically, this township enjoys the distinction of being among the most irregular in Kent County, and it presents many variations in soil and surface. High bluffs along Grand River and the Rouge present the beholder with many magnificent outlooks, over lowland, water course, hillside and plain, rarely excelled; and no more beautiful spot can well be found than the little prairie set in



hills, lying on the Grand Rapids and Ionia State road, just north and east of the little village of Plainfield, where, for many years was the home of the Hon. Henry C. Smith.

Grand River, the Owash-te-nong of the red man, enters the borders of this township by its eastern boundary, at the northeast corner of Section 36, reaches the highest northern point at the exact center of Section 23, where the bridge on the Grand Rapids and Ionia State road crosses its stream; then it sweeps away to the southwest, its banks being originally adorned on either hand with willowy maples and grand old elms that up to the advent of the white man had shed their leaves for centuries on its waves, and the river leaves the township by its southern line, on the southeast quarter of Section 31. The Rouge River, so called from the peculiar tint of its waters, enters the township from the north, on the west half of Section 1, and runs southwesterly, debouching in Grand River on the line of Sections 22 and 23. These are the largest water courses in the township, but there are other small ones, fed by springs and the lakes. A portion of the township is very broken and rugged and it contains several inconsiderable lakes, the two larger ones being named respectively Scott's Lake, lying on Section 17, about three-fourths of a mile long and a half mile wide, quite deep, and well stocked with fish; and Crooked, or Dean's Lake, on Sections 33 and 34, one mile long and half a mile wide. This has an island of one acre, is generally shallow, and quite destitute of fish. But for what the township lacks in lake views it makes ample amends in river scenery.

When John Ball was selecting lands, prior to 1844, he made voluminous notes of those surveyed in this vicinity, and about thirty years later prepared a paper giving a brief description by townships, which was printed in the Michigan Pioneer Collections, under the title of "Physical Geography of Kent County." Notwithstanding his statements were a little discouraging as they related to Plainfield township, the land there is now principally owned by actual residents, who have strenuously endeavored to cultivate and improve it, and a comparison with other townships in the county will show that their efforts have not been in vain. Choice farming land lies in the valleys of the streams. Some of the land is still covered with natural forest trees, thinned out, of course, by the process of seventy-five years of culling in the search for desirable timber for various purposes. Being a purely agricultural and dairy district, in this respect it maintains a high standard of excellence. The soil averages with other lands in the county in fertility and value, being well adapted to certain features of the farming industry, and the farms are rendered profitable according to the energy and intelligence employed. Long years before the white man entered the territory, this was a favorite rendezvous for the Indians in passing through the country, and doubtless was the scene of stealthy plottings against the enemies of their own race, equally as often as against the white intruder.

The honors of first settlement are due to George Miller. He was born in Delaware County, New York, in 1799, and came to Kent County in 1837, settling in Plainfield township on Section 23, where he resided the remainder of a long and useful life. Upon coming here he took up 160 acres of Government land, this being appropriated by the Government for school purposes. He held different offices, with



honor to himself and satisfaction to his constituents, and he served as justice of the peace for twenty years. Mr. Miller's family was the first on the ground in Plainfield township, and the deprivations which fell to their share were the common lot of all who made their homes in this new land at that early day. Grand River was the only thoroughfare and means of communication with the outside world, hence the settlers depended mainly on what they raised, and their own ingenuity, to prepare it for food. Pork, if imported, was \$60 per barrel. The nearest flouring mill was sixty miles away, and the bread eaten in the family of Mr. Miller, for eighteen months, was ground in a coffee mill. In the fall of 1838, the first birth occurred among the whites, in the family of Mr. Miller, a twin girl and boy. They lived but a short time, and theirs were the first deaths, also, among the settlers. The greatest delicacy loving friends were able to offer Mrs. Miller, during her confinement, was boiled wheat.

Among the early settlers, in 1837, we find, in addition to Mr. Miller, James Clark, who settled on Section 24; Cornelius Friant, on Section 24; and Warner Dexter, on Section 13. James Clark was a native of Sussex County, England, and in his native country was game keeper on the estate of Lord Ashburnham. He came to America in 1834 with his family, and after living for a time in Ohio came to Grand Rapids, and while there did the first plastering and laying of brick chimneys with lime mortar, the work being done on the house of Louis Campau, at the corner of Monroe and Waterloo streets. In the spring of 1835 he purchased an acre of ground and erected thereon a log house at what was then the head of Fountain street, just east of Ransom street. The family lived there two years and then located in Plainfield township.

Cornelius Friant was born in New Jersey in 1806. He went from there to Wayne County, New York, and thence, in 1837, to Kent County, Michigan, locating in Plainfield township. He located land and built a cabin, and in the fall went in a canoe to "Scott's" to obtain their household goods left there in the previous spring. Mr. Friant was a powerful, vigorous man, and besides stalwart strength and unbroken health, he brought to the accomplishment of his life purpose an indomitable will and most persistent energy.

In 1838 Ezra Whitney settled on Section 15, Gideon H. Gordon on the same section, Daniel North on Section 31, and in 1844 Samuel Post settled on Section 8, while his father, Jacob Post, and seven other sons settled about the same time. The Posts were of Holland descent and natives of New York State, the father, Jacob Post, having been born in Cayuga County, April 29, 1798. His father was a commissary in the Revolutionary War. Jacob Post and his sons were active in every public movement for the general good and cheerfully contributed their share to the progress of the county.

In 1845 Samuel Gross made his way with his family, by the aid of his axe, to a home on Section 2, and in 1846 Chester Wilson settled on Section 12. Mr. Wilson was born in Vienna, Oneida County, New York, in 1815. His parents, Chester and Anna (Holdrich) Wilson, were natives of Connecticut. The family came to Plainfield township in 1846 and located a homestead. The father was a musician of some note in his native State.



There are many more who should receive a passing notice, but the names and facts concerning them have been lost in the years that have intervened. Those pioneer days were days of toil, privation, and suffering. To rear the rude dwelling, subdue the forest, prepare the soil, fence the lands, harvest the crops, and in short create a home with anything like comfort, required indomitable courage, untiring industry, and unwearied attention. Yet those noble men who forsook the luxurious ease of their Eastern homes, the scenes of their childhood, the graves of their fathers and mothers and kindred friends, and those noble women who left behind them the luxuries of refinement and ease, the allurements of society and style, are worthy of the blessings which the most sanguine of them may have pictured, as well as the gratitude of an enlightened people. Of those who bore a conspicuous part in the settlement and organization of the township, none is now living; but by their tireless energy they helped to open up a township possessed with natural resources of wealth, surpassed by none in the country.

Although the lands were being surveyed and rapidly located, they were not in market, and it was no uncommon thing to see white men and Indians tilling their corn in the same fields, in amicable proximity to each other. But in the fall of 1839 the great land sale came off, when the settlers secured their claims, and the red men vanished from the scene, leaving naught in memoriam but the bones of their dead, on Section 23, where the burial mounds, worn by the attritions of the plow, were fast leveled with the surrounding country.

The first township meeting in Plainfield was held on the first Monday of April, 1838, at a rude log school house on Section 23. The officers elected were: Zenas G. Winsor, supervisor; Ethiel Whitney, township clerk; Daniel North, Samuel Baker, Zenas G. Winsor, and George Miller, justices of the peace; Daniel North, Andrew Watson, and George Miller, assessors; Jacob Francisco and Jacob Friant, directors of the poor; James Francisco, Henry Godwin, and Ezra Whitney, constables; A. D. W. Stout and Warner Dexter, commissioners of highways; Zenas G. Winsor, Ethiel Whitney, and Cornelius Friant, school inspectors; Damas Francisco and Henry Godwin, collectors.

Zenas G. Winsor, who was the first supervisor of Plainfield township, was born in Skaneateles, N. Y., Dec. 14, 1814. He acquired a fair education in the common schools of his native State. In 1830, the business misfortunes of his father, under the old barbarous law of imprisonment for debt, threw upon him and a younger brother the burden of supporting the family, including five young children. For that he left school, engaged as clerk in a store, and was assistant to a physician during the prevalence of cholera among them, in 1832. In the spring of 1833 the family came with the Dexter colony to Ionia, and the next year to Grand Rapids, where the parents died in 1855. Zenas was one of the first to transport lumber from Grand Rapids and goods from Grand Haven up the river to Ionia. As soon as they were fairly housed there, in the fall of 1833, he came with the Territorial County Seat Commissioners as axman, and drove the stake to mark the site selected for the Kent County court house. He then engaged with the pioneer fur trader, Rix Robinson, as clerk, and proceeded to Grand Haven to take charge of the trading post there, with



three or four aids. After about a year he came up to the Rapids and erected a small store at the corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets (No. 98 Monroe street), his employer having offered to stock it and share with him the profits. This enterprise fell through. He remained with Mr. Robinson some time longer at an increased salary, and then drifted into other lines of trade. In 1836, with Edward P. Macy, a New York banker, he opened an exchange or brokerage at Ionia, where the land office had been located, and in that business, until the financial revulsion of the following year, made a marked success, exchanging currency for the numerous land buyers. At the organization of Plainfield township he lived there and was chosen its first supervisor and also was elected justice of the peace at the same time. Returning to Grand Rapids in 1843 he became interested in a pail factory; then soon afterward in the mercantile trade in the Faneuil Hall block. With his brother, Jacob W., he was also engaged in manufacturing and exporting lumber for several years. About 1850 he built for a residence a stone house, considered in those days a very fine building, at the junction of Washington street and Jefferson avenue. In the following year he went to California and spent nearly two years there, in Mexico, and further south. Returning, he engaged with Daniel Ball in the steamboat business on the river, which he followed until 1859, when he went to Pennsylvania, and there was for a time president and manager of the Tioga County Bank. Again he returned to Grand Rapids and engaged in the dry goods trade until 1863, when he sold out and went to look after an investment in Nevada silver mines, which he soon discovered was lost. Next he engaged in trade—purchase and shipment of goods between New York and Grand Rapids. In 1866 he operated in developing oil wells and the petroleum trade in Canada, with only moderate profit. In 1868 he engaged at Grand Haven in the storage, forwarding and commission business, in which he remained until about 1885, when he returned to Grand Rapids. He died Aug. 2, 1890.

In 1840, Gideon H. Gordon erected on Section 15 the first mill placed upon the Rouge River. It had a small grist mill attached, and there the settlers and Indians carried their corn to be ground. In 1848, a saw-mill was erected by Roberts & Winsor on Section 2, at a point then called Gibraltar. It was afterward owned by H. B. Childs & Company, who erected in its near vicinity a paper mill, in 1866. This was destroyed by fire in 1869, but was rebuilt the second year by the enterprising proprietors. It was on the line of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad and became known as Child's Mills Station, but the growth of the village of Rockford, near by, has caused it to diminish in importance. In 1850, a saw-mill was erected by Robert Konkle some forty rods from the mouth of the Rouge and it was afterward owned by Tradewell & Towle. Mill Creek runs through the southwest corner of the township, and as early as 1838 a saw-mill was erected on this stream, on Section 31, by Daniel North. It was afterward owned by Eli Plumb, who erected a flouring mill at the same place, in 1866. It was on the line of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, and the station was first known as North's Mills, later as Mill Creek, but now the station is called Comstock, and the locality, a fine residential site, is known as Comstock Park. There is also a railway station at Belmont, about six miles northeast of Grand Rap-



ids. It lies in the midst of a fine farming district, but otherwise it possesses no particular advantages or attractions. Plainfield village is a small place at the foot of the bluffs on Section 23. It was the old ferrying post, when a ferryboat was the only means of communication—if we except the Indian canoe—between the two banks of the Grand River. It has a sunny site and a pleasant outlook up and down the river.

Rockford, on the line between Plainfield and Algoma townships, is a thriving village. The growth of the place has been quite rapid, and a bright future for it is confidently expected.

In the winter of 1838, the accidental shooting and subsequent death of Peleg Barlow, who had come to seek a home but had not located, cast a saddening gloom over the little band of pioneers.

The township of Plainfield has today within her borders eight excellent schools, exclusive of the high schools to which the children have access. These institutions of learning are in charge of a corps of specially trained instructors, who receive compensation according to their attainments and efficiency. No township in the county has a better system of public schools or a more appreciative class of patrons.

The township now, as a whole, presents a striking contrast to what it was when the early pioneers came. The majestic solitudes, before those days unbroken, save by the howling of the wild beast, the war of the elements, or peals of the reverberating thunder, now respond to the busy hum of industry, the scream of the locomotive, and the chime of the church-going bell. Where the red man once bivouacked around his campfire, with his girdle of wampum strung with the scalps of his enemies, and then whirled into mazes of the war-dance, now fields of plenty and homes of industry, comfort, elegance, luxury, gladden the eye of the beholder. Where the unsightly swamps and quagmires and waste places marred the symmetry and beauty of nature, now arises the stately manufactory, with its thundering machinery, all subjected to the control of man, for the good of this generation—yes, and of generations yet unborn; where vice, ignorance, and superstition was the rule, now it is the exception, and institutions flourish which are worthy of the progress of the age, and a bright prospect opens for the future.

A list of the supervisors of Plainfield township from its organization down to the present time is as follows: 1838, Zenas G. Winsor; 1839, Collins Leach; 1841, Ezra Whitney; 1842, Gideon H. Gordon; 1843, A. Watson; 1845, H. C. Smith; 1847, William Thornton; 1848, Chester Wilson, jr.; 1849, Henry C. Smith; 1853, Peter B. Wilson; 1854, John Hamilton; 1856, H. C. Smith; 1859, James K. Morris; 1861, H. C. Smith; 1867, Austin Richardson; 1869, Horace Konkle; 1876, H. D. Plumb; 1877, Horace Konkle; 1878, Henry D. Plumb; 1880, Nathaniel Rice; 1889, Robert M. Hutchins; 1891, Henry D. Plumb; 1892, Charles N. Hyde; 1896, Thad O. Brownell; 1900, Charles L. Smith; 1901, Thad O. Brownell; 1903, Austin Laubach; 1906, Charles H. Plumb; 1907, Peter R. Walker; 1908, Charles Plumb; 1909, Peter R. Walker; 1911, John Van Dam; 1914, Weaver J. Stout; 1916, Thomas A. Hice, present incumbent.

Horace Konkle was born Dec. 1, 1824, in Northampton County, Pennsylvania, and came with his parents to Plainfield township in

1839. His active life was devoted principally to farming and lumbering. He held the office of supervisor seven years, township treasurer seven years, and filled the various school offices.

Thaddeus O. Brownell was born in Plainfield township, July 6, 1852. He was reared an agriculturist and fruit grower, which industries claimed his attention throughout all of his career. He was educated in the common schools of his township. He served as tax collector four years and in 1896 was elected supervisor, being re-elected in 1897, 1898, 1899, and again in 1901.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### VERGENNES TOWNSHIP

BOUNDARIES—FIRST WHITE SETTLER—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING—  
RODNEY ROBINSON — EARLY SETTLERS — PHYSICAL FEATURES —  
VILLAGE OF FALLASSBURG—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

Vergennes is bounded on the north by Grattan, on the east by Ionia County, on the south by Lowell township and on the west by Ada.

Sylvester Hodges was the first white settler. He was born in Jefferson County, New York. His education was acquired in the common schools and he followed farming all of his life. He came to Kent County at an early period, 1836, and "took up" 160 acres of land belonging to Uncle Sam. He was a member of the "Knock Down Society," organized in Vergennes, in 1836, for the protection of the squatters from the land sharks. It is said that Mr. Hodges transplanted the first apple trees put out in the township of Lowell, and that he also assisted in building the first house where the village of Lowell now stands. He was married in 1836 to Martha Gould, born in Tompkins County, New York. Mrs. Hodges learned the tailoress' trade in her native State, and for many years she was the only one of the calling nearer than Grand Rapids, her services being in constant demand among all classes. In the earlier days she spun, wove and made the family clothing, and she also made clothes for the Indians. She spun the first flax on the Flat River and the lint was brought by the Robinson family in 1836.

The township of Vergennes was organized in the year 1838. The first township meeting was held on the second day of April, of the same year, when the following persons were chosen as the first township officers: Supervisor, Rodney Robinson; clerk, M. Patrick; assessors, Lewis Robinson, T. I. Daniels, and John M. Fox; collector, Porter Ralph; school inspectors, Everett Wilson, Lewis Robinson, and George Brown; directors of the poor, Everett Wilson and Charles Newton; commissioners of highways, Lucas Robinson, Henry Daines and P. W. Fox; constables, Porter Ralph, A. D. Smith, O. H. Jones, and James S. Fox.

Rodney Robinson was a native of New York State, a brother of Rix Robinson, and he settled in Vergennes in 1837, taking up land from the Government. At the organization of the township he was



elected supervisor, his brother Lewis was chosen assessor, and another brother, Lucas, was elected commissioner of highways. The family of Robinsons has been a noted one in Kent County. Those of the pioneer generation were stalwart, muscular men, and as famous for their kind hearts as for strength, and many incidents of their lives are still remembered and told among their descendants of the present day, or the descendants of their neighbors.

John M. Fox came to Vergennes in 1837, but after 1846 resided many years in Grand Rapids; where he was well known and respected as a citizen, business man and a public officer. During the last ten years of his life he resided at Lowell, where he died, Jan. 4, 1873, aged 62 years.

Philip W. Fox was born in Herkimer County, New York, in 1812. He early learned the trade of wool-carding and cloth-dressing, which he followed from the age of 18 to 22. He was among the earliest settlers of Vergennes township, coming in 1837, when the forests were unbroken and Indians more plentiful than other kinds of neighbors. He followed the occupation of farming exclusively after coming to Michigan. In Vergennes township he held the offices of commissioner of highways and township treasurer.

It is said that at the time of this first election there were only about nineteen families in the township. A gentleman who went to Vergennes in 1838 said that, as he passed through the township of Lowell, on his way from Canada, he counted but three houses. For several years the farmers in that vicinity were obliged to take their grists to Ionia, to Grandville, or to Kalamazoo, to be ground. Considering the poor roads which the scattered communities were then tortured with, and the bridgeless streams to be crossed, such journeys undoubtedly seemed most uninviting. The entire country was then a howling wilderness. Grand Rapids could boast of but half a score of houses, with most of them owned by one man; and two stores, one kept by "Uncle Louis," and the other by a man named Watson. Among the early settlers in Vergennes may be mentioned the following: Silas S. Fallass, who settled in the year 1838; J. Wesley Fallass in 1837, Lucas Robinson in 1837, Thompson I. Daniels in 1837, James Wells in 1842, A. R. Hoag in 1841, Sylvester Hodges in 1836, James S. Fox in 1836, William P. Perrin in 1837, Alexander Rogers in 1838, Alanson K. Shaw in 1839, Emery Foster in 1837, Newcomb Godfrey in 1838, Amos Hodges in 1838, Eliab Walker in 1838, Christopher Misner in 1838, Morgan Lyon in 1838, Benjamin Fairchild in 1838, John Branagan in 1837, Alfred Van Deusen in 1838, and Adam Van Deusen in 1840.

J. Wesley Fallass was a native of Madison County, New York. He came to Kent County when a young man, in 1837, and located at what has since been known as Fallassburg, where he built a mill and early began the manufacture of lumber and flour. Going back to his native State, in 1842, he there married, and with his bride returned to Vergennes township, and until the year 1875 continued to operate his mill. In that year he disposed of it to his sons and turned his attention to his farm, which he cultivated until his death, Nov. 5, 1896. He was the father of the late Henry B. Fallass, long a prominent lawyer in Grand Rapids.



A. R. Hoag was born in New York in 1817. He was educated in the subscription schools of New York and Michigan, his parents being pioneers in Ulster County, New York, as well as Washtenaw and Kent Counties, Michigan. Mr. Hoag came to Kent County in May, 1841, and thus was familiar with the entire role of pioneer life, including wolves, Indians, etc. He was among the first in the movement to organize the Kent County Insurance Company, served four years as its first president and afterward as director.

Alexander Rogers was born in Lewis County, New York, Aug. 4, 1809. He was reared on a farm until 19, when he learned the mason's trade, which he followed five years, and the remainder of his life was spent upon a farm. In 1835 he came to Redford, Wayne County, Michigan, and entered 160 acres of land in Livingston County. In 1838 he came to Lowell and later was numbered among the pioneers of Vergennes township.

Newcomb Godfrey was born in 1806, in the Empire State. He attended the common schools of Canada and New York and followed farming all of his life. He was a noted pioneer and brought to his work the strength and determination necessary to his circumstances. As a rail-splitter he became a well-deserved celebrity, being able to cut and split 250 rails daily, between sun and sun.

Eliab Walker was born in New York in 1797. Upon coming to Vergennes township he took up a farm from the Government and built a log cabin which differed little from other structures of the kind at that period. It had at first no floor, but one of elm bark was soon placed in position.

Christopher Misner was born in Canada in 1806. He was educated in the subscription schools and followed the vocation of farming all of his life. The Indians were very numerous at the time he made his residence in Vergennes, but they were friendly and valuable assistants to the pioneer.

Morgan Lyon was born at Norwich, Chenango County, New York, Oct. 16, 1810. When he was young the family was poor, struggling with farm life and pioneer privations in a newly and thinly settled region. His early education was only such as could be gained in country district schools of that period. In 1836, looking forward for a chance of bettering his prospects, he emigrated to Howell, Livingston County, Michigan, where he settled upon a farm of 160 acres. A year or two later he sold that and moved again, into the almost unbroken wilderness of Vergennes, where he entered, in June, 1838, upon 160 acres of land on Section 20 of that township, where he made his home. About 1865 he moved to the village of Lowell and lived there some three years, but meantime retained his farm to which he returned. In Vergennes he held the offices of justice of the peace and supervisor.

The Van Deusens were natives of New York and of German descent. Some of their descendants still reside in the vicinity of Lowell.

The soil of Vergennes is mostly heavy, yet along the banks of Flat River is found some quite light and sandy. The greater portion of the township consists of what might be called oak openings. A belt of timbered land originally extended south from Murray Lake, one and one-half miles wide, and four miles in length, reaching into



Sections 20 and 21 ; also a short strip of timbered land lay on the west side of the same lake. The township is well watered by Flat River and numerous little tributaries through the easterly and central part, and Honey Creek, which passes through three sections on the westerly tier. Flat River passes into Vergennes from the east, three-quarters of a mile south of the northeasterly corner of the township, when it curves and passes back into Ionia County at a point about three-quarters of a mile south of the place of entrance. It re-enters on Section 13, and, meandering southwesterly, passes out near the quarter post on the south line of Section 35. It forms a junction with the Grand at the village of Lowell. The lakes in Vergennes are nearly all small. Murray Lake, formerly called Eagle, or Nagle, or Horse Shoe Lake, projects a short distance into the township. Eagle was once the most familiar name. It was thus christened after a bird of that species which built its nest in a large oak on an island or peninsula in the lake. From its resemblance to a horse shoe it sometimes passes by that name. It has an outlet called Lake Creek, which is a tributary of Flat River. Odell Lake is situated near the center of Section 29. It is fifty rods in width and has an average depth of thirteen feet. The lake and surrounding swamp cover about eighty acres. Cole's Lake, situated on the east half of Section 30, is a shallow sheet of water, covering about ten acres. Miller's Lake, situated on the west half of Section 29, is quite deep and covers four or five acres. Long Lake, situated on Section 19, is a fine body of water, about three-quarters of a mile in length, with an average width of thirty rods. It is frequented by pleasure seekers in both summer and winter.

Vergennes has good educational facilities. Its schools are well organized and are supplied with competent teachers. The school buildings are generally good, though not costly, and present a tidy appearance.

The village of Fallassburg site was settled upon about the year 1838, by the family or families from which it derived its name. Two mills and a hotel were erected there before the present thriving village of Lowell had commenced to be built up. The Fallassburg grist mill, a three-story wooden building, situated on Flat River, was erected in 1840 by J. Wesley Fallass; and Hecox's saw-mill, a three-story wooden building, with the upper part occupied for years as a chair factory, was erected in 1839 by Charles Hecox. Mercantile houses were also opened, but the growth of Lowell was the death knell of Fallassburg and its industrial history is now but a memory.

The following is a list of supervisors for Vergennes township from its organization in 1838 down to the present time: 1838, Rodney Robinson; 1839, John M. Fox; 1840, John J. Devendorf; 1841, Alan-son K. Shaw; 1842, Thompson I. Daniels; 1845, Arba Richards; 1846, Henry M. Brown; 1848, John B. Shear; 1849, Thompson I. Daniels; 1850, Morgan Lyon; 1851, Lucas Robinson; 1853, Orlando J. O'Dell; 1856, Philip W. Fox; 1857, Thompson I. Daniels; 1859, Silas A. Yerkes; 1861, Alex. McLean; 1863, Jacob W. Walker; 1892, Fred L. Hodges; 1898, Owen J. Howard; 1901, Edmund M. Alger; 1912, Allen S. Bennett; 1916, Delbert D. Krum, present incumbent.

Alexander McLean was born in the State of New York in 1816,

and was on his father's farm at Caledonia, Livingston County, that State, until he was twenty-four years of age. His first venture for himself was teaching school, which he commenced at twenty years of age. After he was twenty-one he worked on the farm summers at \$12 a month and taught school winters for \$14 to \$18 a month. With a little means thus accumulated, and a small sum given him by his father, he came to this county in 1838, and bought between 200 and 300 acres of land in Bowne township. The same fall he returned home and remained there until 1841, when he again came to this county and entered 160 acres in Vergennes township, where he resided the remainder of his life. After a year or so he sold his land in Bowne township and used the proceeds to improve his home place, which was then an oak opening and utterly wild. For the next three years he devoted all his energies to the clearing and improvement of this place. In 1844 he built his first house, which was of logs, 18x24 feet in dimensions. In breaking his land Mr. McLean used four to six yoke of cattle, sowed the land to wheat, raised fifteen to twenty bushels to the acre, hauled the crop to market at Grand Rapids by ox-team and obtained 50 cents per bushel for his grain, many times being obliged to take his pay in "trade." For recreation in the fall of the year, with rifle in hand he would hunt deer, turkey, etc., which were then abundant. He devoted the winter time to cutting and clearing. He served as township clerk three or four years in the early period of settlement, was justice of the peace about eight years, and served as supervisor for two years.

Jacob W. Walker was born in Canada in 1827, and was a son of Eliab Walker, mentioned in the foregoing as one of the early settlers of Vergennes township. Mr. Walker held the office of supervisor for thirty consecutive years.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### WALKER TOWNSHIP

TOPOGRAPHY AND WATER COURSES—EARLY SETTLEMENTS—SAMUEL WHITE—ROBERT HILTON—FIRST ELECTION—EARLY INDUSTRIES—RICHARD E. BUTTERWORTH—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

Topographically, this township is quite diversified. The Grand River and its tributaries drain the territory. These tributaries consist of several streams, perhaps the most important one of which is Indian Creek, formerly known as Indian Mill Creek. It derived its name from a mill which was erected near its mouth by the Indians, or for them, many years ago. The site of this mill was near the present junction of the Detroit & Milwaukee with the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, on Section 13, and is now within the city limits of Grand Rapids. The source of the stream is in Alpine township. It enters Walker from the north, at the northeast corner of Section 4, and passes through Sections 10, 15, 14, and 13, and unites with Grand River near the Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad bridge. There was once considerable pine along its banks, and during the first ten years of the early settlement of the township, five saw-mills were erected.



In the year 1850, three of them remained. Now, the pine is gone, and gone also are the mills. Brandy Creek, which is a branch of Indian Creek, rises on Section 16 and, flowing northeasterly, enters the latter on the south side of Section 10. Black Skin Creek—said to be so called after an Indian chief of that name—rises in the southern part of the original township and flowing south enters Grand River on the south side of Section 5. Sand Creek flows through the northwesterly part of the township and passes out into Ottawa County on the west. There are several other small creeks in the township, but none demanding particular notice.

The valleys or bottom lands adjacent to the streams are especially fertile, highly improved, and very valuable. The higher lands are not so rich for agricultural purposes. On the east and south, along Grand River, is a tract of low land, from eighty rods to a mile in width, extending from the northeast to the southwest corner of the township, as it was before the encroachment of the city, which is underlaid with a strata of limestone, lying from two to ten feet below the surface. Above this is a gravelly loam, which, in some parts, is filled and covered with large boulders. Back of this is a series of hills and sandy bluffs, rising to a height of fifty or sixty feet. The sandy belt also extends diagonally across the township from the northeast to southwest, and varies in width from one-half to two miles. The original timber of the low land described was elm, black oak, soft maple, hemlock, cedar, etc., and of the bluffs, pine and oak. In the remainder of the township the principal varieties of timber, which abounded in almost exhaustless supply and excellent quality, was chiefly beach and sugar maple, with considerable valuable oak interspersed through some portions. The surface of the remainder of the township is generally rolling, but no elevations of any considerable magnitude appear. At the time of the first white settlement, the woods abounded in game of all kinds known in the country. Deer were exceedingly plentiful and afforded the principal meat supply of the early settlers. Every man and boy, and some of the female population, were expert hunters, and many are the tales told of hair-breadth escapes from, and single-handed contests with bruin, the arch enemy of the young domestic animals about the settlers' cabins. Wolves and wild-cats also made night hideous and nocturnal travel precarious, with their prowling, stealthy and deceptive methods of attack.

The first settlement of the township of Walker antedates its organization by at least two years. The township organization was effected in the month of April, 1838, the first township meeting being held at the Mission School House, which stood on the west bank of Grand River on ground now occupied by the street railway terminal building. The records indicate that this was the only school house then in the township, for it was spoken of as "the School House of Walker."

It is not definitely known as to who was the first actual permanent settler of the township of Walker, but it was settled mostly by people from the State of New York. In the year 1837 Samuel White, then a man fifty-six years of age, came with his family from Canada, and settled on Section 23, all of which section is now included within the city limits. Mr. White was a native of New York, born April 1,



1781, and he claimed to have been descended from Peregrine White, the first white child born in America. Before coming to Michigan he lived for a number of years in Canada, but in December, 1836, he came to Kent County with a team of six yoke of oxen, and spent New Year's Day at Gull Prairie. In the spring of 1837 he settled in Walker, where he took up 160 acres of land on Section 23, and he continued to buy land until he owned about 400. On the west side of the river there was yet no trace of civilization, and Mr. White cut the first road and drove the first team into the wilderness of Walker township. The family numbered nine persons—four sons and three daughters. The father was a practical miller and his sons acquired a knowledge of the business that proved useful in a new country, and the eldest stopped at Gull Prairie to work in a mill. They brought eighteen head of cattle with them and took up their quarters in an Indian hut on the river bank, where the whole family sickened with the measles except one son, Jonas M., who took care of the stock, brought lumber from Mill Creek, six miles up the river, rafted it down, drew it out to the claim and built the cabin. Mr. White built the first frame barn west of Grand River; and soon after this, with the assistance of his sons, Milo and James, erected a saw-mill on Indian Creek, on the north side of Section 15. Another son, Samuel, was the first volunteer for the Civil War in Walker township, and he attained the rank of second lieutenant. The father died at his home in Walker township, March 4, 1873.

At about the same time, Jesse Smith, who was also from Canada, settled on what is now Bridge street, about two miles west of the river. He had a large family of sons and daughters, some of whom were married and who settled in different parts of the township. One of the elder sons, Benjamin, commenced at an early day on the south side of Section 10, where he built a small grist-mill and machine shop on Indian Creek.

And also, about the same time, a Frenchman, by the name of John J. Nardin, who had served in the French army under Napoleon the First, came from Detroit, with a large family, and settled in the southern part of the township, west of the site of the old Eagle Plaster Mills.

Then came Zelotis Bemis and Robert Hilton, who went still further south and located on the north bank of the river, two or three miles below the plaster mills. A portion of the Bemis farm was formerly an "Indian Planting Ground." Soon after he settled, Mr. Bemis commenced raising wheat quite extensively, the harvesting of which furnished employment for some of those who came a year or two later.

Robert Hilton—characterized by an early local writer as "a stanch-made, thorough-rigged, live-oak individual, with several knots and branches on him"—was born in Mt. Vernon, Me., Dec. 2, 1799. Coming to Grand Rapids in 1836, a carpenter by trade, he first selected a piece of land for a farm, on the right bank of the river, some miles below the Rapids. He paid \$2 per bushel for seed wheat, bringing it from Gull Prairie, and when he harvested his crop it would only bring 50 cents per bushel. While on the farm he worked much of the time in the village at his trade, coming and returning



by canoe on the river; also superintended the erection of the lighthouse at Grand Haven, going down in the morning and returning in the evening by steamer. There were many Indians about him, but as a rule they were friendly. An incident illustrating his quickness in judging of savage human nature is related. Coming home one day he found a dog worrying his pigs and near by an Indian leaning upon his gun and watching the animals. Hilton leaped from his horse, seized that gun, shot the dog, and handed the weapon back with the simple, terse remark in the native's own language, "Bad Indian," remounted and rode away without another word. That Indian never troubled him again, but seemed to admire his Yankee courage. After a few years he moved into Grand Rapids, where he resided until his death, in 1885. Some of his first work in the city was on the old National Hotel and on Judge Morrison's house. He built for the Nelson Brothers a building of two stores where now is the Grinnell building. He was also the master workman in the erection of the Swedenborgian Church, which stood on the corner of Division and Lyon streets, just north of the United States postoffice building; also on the woodwork of the Catholic Church, which stood so long at the southwest corner of Ottawa and Monroe streets; also St. Mary's (Catholic) on the west side, a Gothic structure.

The following named persons settled in the township soon after those already mentioned: Henry Helmka, William W. Anderson, Joseph Danton, John Hogadone, and Harry B. Munro, from Canada; John Harrington, of Vermont; and Patrick O'Brien, Stephen O'Brien and James Murray, from Ireland. The family of Edisons also came at an early day and settled on what is now Bridge street.

Joseph Danton was born in Nova Scotia in 1809. The family removed to Upper Canada in 1818, and two years later the father died. Mr. Danton learned the carpenter's trade before attaining his majority, and in 1838 came to Grand Rapids. He arrived on the Fourth of July in the midst of a celebration, participated in by fifty persons, a considerable crowd for that period. His trade made him a welcome comer among the settlers, and he made himself useful putting in doors, windows, floors, roofs, etc. He bought eighty acres of land in Walker, in 1839, and cleared seventy, then sold and bought 106 acres in Section 2.

John Hogadone was a native of New York, born May 7, 1785. In 1811 he moved from Albany County, New York, to Canada, where he resided until 1839. In the spring of 1838 his son, Peter, came to Kent County, and the next year the remainder of the family—including five sons, ranging in age from twenty-two to nine years, and three daughters—set out with three two-horse wagons and drove through to Walker township. They started on Nov. 1 and arrived on Nov. 16. The family located on a tract of land in Section 28, and cleared about 120 acres. Mr. Hogadone died June 6, 1863.

Harry B. Munro was born in Long Island, N. Y., July 9, 1794, and served six months as a soldier in the War of 1812. In 1836 he pre-empted eighty acres on Section 5 in Walker township. Later, when he brought his family to Michigan, they came from East Guilingsburg, forty miles north of Toronto, Canada, driving through with a three-horse team. They reached Walker township a Saturday morning, stayed over Sunday with Eleazer C. Taber, cut a half mile



of road, built a small log house and moved into it, Tuesday evening. The eldest son did not come until four years later, and David, a boy of fourteen years, was the only assistant of his father. When the fall came the whole family was ill with the "chills," as fever and ague was then popularly termed, except the father.

John Harrington came to Walker township in 1838, and pre-empted eighty acres on Section 2. The first year in which that land came into market he purchased forty acres on the same section, bid in by Solomon Wright at \$1.25 per acre.

Stephen O'Brien was a native of County Lowth, Ireland. He came to the United States in 1835, accompanied by his brother, Bernard; spent one year in New York, then came to Michigan and lived one year at St. Joseph; and in 1837 he pre-empted eighty acres in each of the three sections—28, 29, and 32—in Walker township. For some years the brothers worked together as partners. Meantime, their father and mother came from Ireland to Michigan and the father improved one of the tracts mentioned until his death, at the age of ninety-one years. Stephen O'Brien accumulated a farm of 240 acres, which was heavily timbered with oak, beech, maple, and black walnut, yet he succeeded in having it all cleared and devoted it to general farming. But he lost everything in 1873, including his farm. He died April 13, 1894.

Eleazer C. Taber immigrated to Kent County in October, 1837. After spending six months in Grand Rapids he settled on Section 5 of Walker township, where he resided the remainder of his days, dying in 1854 at the age of fifty-six years.

Solomon Wright was among the first settlers in Alpine township, where he located in 1837. He came west in 1836, but stopped several months in Toledo, Ohio, where he purchased a team and employed it profitably during the winter, making his way westward in the spring. He left his family in Jackson County, near Jacksonburg, and proceeded with his household goods and fifty bushels of potatoes on a scow down Grand River, stopping at North's landing, later called Plumb's Mills. He pre-empted 480 acres for himself and sons—Solomon and Benjamin—on the line between Walker and Alpine, on Sections 32 and 33, in Alpine township. The Baptist and Congregational Churches are situated on this tract. Mr. Wright sold 160 acres and moved across the line into Walker township, where he purchased 120 acres in Section 4; and there he continued to reside until his death in June, 1845.

There are many others who could hardly be classed as first settlers, but who were known as early residents, among them being Thomas McMan, David Waters, William C. Davidson, Jonathan Blair, Martin Wheeler, Bernard Courtney, and Quigley, in the south part; Samuel Westlake, the Schermerhorns, Phillips, Escotts, Burds, Samuel Corporon, Thomas Cotney, Asa Pratt, Thales Hean, Daniel Stocking, and the Armstrongs, near the central part; the Matthews, A. C. Bailey, Samuel Root, Miner Johnson, John S. Miller, Peter Huwer, Andrew Loomis, Tenny, the Chappells, Fullers, Covell, and Dean, in the north; and Palmerlee, Tryon, Berry Wait, Devendorf, and Lamoreaux, in the west.

Jonathan Blair came west to Michigan in 1842, and two years later came to Walker township, where he rented a farm of 120 acres,



on Section 4, owned by Robert Hilton and Nathaniel Fisk. Two years later he purchased 138 acres on Section 6, and there he died in 1852.

Samuel Westlake was born in New York in 1821, and was employed in the woolen factory of his father there until he had reached his majority. On Sept. 20, 1842, he came to Walker township with his parents and settled on 133 acres on Section 6, which they had purchased three years previously. In 1849 Samuel purchased eighty acres of timber land on Section 19. Mr. Westlake was a local elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church, having been licensed when he was nineteen years old.

John S. Miller was born in Augusta, Oneida County, New York, Jan. 22, 1812. With his parents he moved to Smithfield, Madison County, that State, and at the age of seventeen years began work at the shoemaker's trade, which he followed twenty years. He came to Walker township about 1856, and there served as highway commissioner several years.

The record of the first election in the township of Walker has been lost or was not properly kept, hence it is impossible to give the names of all those who were first chosen as officials of the township. However, it is known that the first township meeting was held at the Mission School House, in the spring of 1838. The first officers of the township so far as is known were as follows: Supervisor, Lovell Moore; clerk, Isaac Turner; treasurer, Harry Eaton; justices, Robert Hilton, Isaac Turner, Ira Jones, and Isaiah Burton.

Harry Eaton was bred a farmer in Vermont, came here in 1836 and engaged in mercantile trade and lumbering. He was sheriff of Kent County in 1841 and was the first treasurer of Walker township. He was also one of the charter members of Grand River Lodge, No. 34, F. and A. M., and at his death, in 1859, his funeral was attended by the Grand Lodge of Masons, then in session here. He was highly esteemed by the early residents, as a genial and entertaining host at a neat little grocery and restaurant which stood where now is the north end of the Pantlind Hotel Block.

Ira Jones was an early settler who located eventually on the west side of the river, near the Indian village, and there resided some forty years.

Walker is as thickly settled as any township which contains no village. The southeasterly part is mostly divided into small lots, containing from five to forty acres, which are usually devoted to market gardening and fruit growing. The westerly and northwesterly part is devoted principally to farming purposes. In that locality are to be seen some quite large, as well as fine, farms. Peaches, apples and other kinds of fruit are raised in abundance on the sandy belt, and on most parts of the clay land. The low lands along the river produce good crops of grass and grain. The greatest elevation in the township is the high rolling swell of land extending from Section 32 in the southwest through the central part, broken by Brandy creek, continuing northward on the west of Indian creek, and afterward crossing the line into Alpine. On the highest part of this ridge, near the center of Section 9, is a lake covering about four acres, situated in the middle of a swamp of about twenty acres. This lake is about 100 feet above the level of Grand river and has no visible outlet. Poles have been sunk sixty feet without striking any solid bottom.



Originally there was a swamp of about 100 acres on Bridge street, three and one-half miles west of the river, lying mostly on Section 29, and there was also one about the same size in the southern part of Section 6. There was one of rather small dimensions on Section 8, and also one on Section 34. There were other small swamps in different parts of the township, but a good system of drainage has redeemed to the plow, and they are all now either good agricultural or meadow land.

In the year 1845, Joseph Bullen erected a saw mill on the eastern part of Section 4. It was run by an overshot waterwheel, the water being conveyed from the pond on Indian creek, near the residence of Solomon Wright, in Alpine, a distance of nearly ninety rods. The mill possessed the facilities for sawing one million feet of lumber per year. It also contained a run of mill-stones for grinding "feed," etc.

The plaster mills and quarries on Section 34, two and one-half miles below Bridge street, in the side of the bluff near the river, are on the east part of the section. Gypsum was first discovered there by R. E. Butterworth, of Grand Rapids, who then owned the land. He opened the first quarry in the year 1852, and it was operated under the superintendence of Bernard Courtney. This is the mine to which was given the name of "Plaster Cave" or "Hovey's Cave," operated by the Eagle Mills Plaster Company.

Richard E. Butterworth was born in Jamaica, West India Islands, of British parentage, and was an engineer, educated at Manchester, England. He came to Grand Rapids in 1843 and purchased land just southwest of the city, where he developed a gypsum quarry and engaged in plaster manufacture about nine years later. Selling his mill and property there, he moved into the city in 1856 and lived here till his death, at nearly 82 years of age, in 1888. Here he engaged in the foundry and machine business, buying therefor the iron works at the foot of the east side canal, and this business he carried on during the remainder of his life. He built three brick blocks near those works. At one time he established a petroleum refinery, but this business was soon discontinued. In his later years he traveled much in Europe and in the Pacific region of this country, and, being a constant reader, acquired a great fund of information. One of his latest acts was a gift of about \$12,000 to the foundation of St. Mary's Hospital.

The following is a complete list of the Supervisors of Walker township from its organization, in 1838, down to the present time: 1838, Lovell Moore; 1840, Ebenezer Davis; 1842, James Davis; 1844, Isaac Turner; 1845, James Davis; 1847, John Potter; 1848, Silas Hall; 1849, John Potter; 1851, William A. Tryon; 1853, Curtis Porter; 1854, Milo White; 1859, William C. Davidson; 1860, Milo White; 1861, Charles H. Leonard; 1863, Jeffery C. Champlin; 1864, Henry C. Hoga-done; 1866, Horace McNitt; 1867, Jeffery Champlin; 1868, Ezra A. Hebard; 1875, Abiel A. Wilson; 1876, Perley W. Johnson; 1877, Abiel A. Wilson; 1878, Ezra A. Hebard; 1880, Abiel A. Wilson; 1882, Perley W. Johnson; 1883, Abiel A. Wilson; 1887, John Kinney; 1894, A. W. Graham; 1895, John Kinney; 1896, A. R. Edison; 1897, John M. Edison; 1900, Louis J. Blair; 1901, Anson R. Harrington; 1903, John H. Edison; 1904, Anson R. Harrington; 1906, William S. Lamoreaux; 1913, A. R. Harrington; 1917, William S. Lamoreaux, present incumbent.



Ebenezer Davis came from Niagara county, New York, in 1836, and soon thereafter settled just south of Leonard street, by the west bank of the river, where he took a fractional eighty of Government land, in 1840. He removed to Wyoming township in 1852.

Henry C. Hogadone was born in Canada, in 1823. He was a son of John Hogadone, one of the pioneers of Walker township, and with his father, mother, five brothers and three sisters, came to the township in 1839. He served as justice of the peace four years, township treasurer two years, drain commissioner five years and supervisor two years.

Ezra Armstrong Hebard was born in Leyden, Franklin county, Massachusetts, March 2, 1830, and commenced the study of medicine, in 1848, at Lapeer, Mich., his home at that time. He attended the first course of medical lectures in Michigan University during the winter of 1849-50, and graduated at Berkshire Medical College, Massachusetts, Nov. 26, 1851. Shortly after graduation he settled at Dryden, Lapeer county, Michigan, remaining until 1858, when he removed to Winona, Minn., where he practiced until after the Civil war. In 1866 he came to the vicinity of Grand Rapids, settling on a farm in Walker township, where he continued to reside, with the exception of two years residence in the city. He served nine years as supervisor of Walker township, and was a member of the Grand Rapids Board of Pension Examiners during the first administration of President Cleveland.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### COURTLAND TOWNSHIP

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES—ORGANIZATION—SOIL—FIRST LAND ENTRIES—EARLY SETTLERS—PHILIP BECKER—LIST OF SUPERVISORS—WILLIAM H. MYERS.

This township comprises township 9, range 10 west, which is in the northern part of the county, and is bounded on its north by Nelson, on its east by Oakfield, on its south by Cannon, and on its west by the township of Algoma. Like a great deal of the land in Kent county, this is level or undulating, and is of a fertile quality. The township is well supplied with small streams and there are also a number of lakes. Myer's Lake, the largest, is situated on Sections 27 and 28. It is triangular in shape, being about one and one-half miles in length by one-half mile in breadth in the widest place. It has fine gravelly banks and is one of the most beautiful lakes in the county. Stoner's Lake, a small but fine body of water, is situated on the southeasterly portion of Section 22. Big and Little Brower Lakes are situated on the southern part of Section 34. Both of them are small.

The present township of Courtland, together with some five other townships, were united under the name of Courtland, about the year 1839. Subsequently Algoma was detached from this organization, and still later by a legislative mistake, Oakfield and Courtland were reorganized under the euphonious name of Wabasis. The following legislature corrected this mistake, however. The first officers of the

township were: Supervisor, Philo Beers; clerk, Thomas Addison. The records do not give the names of the persons filling the less important offices.

The soil of Courtland is mostly good. The southern part is what is called timbered openings; the northern part was originally timbered with pine, mixed with hard wood, and the soil is less productive than the southern part. There are many better townships, but yet there is some land within its boundaries that cannot be outdone in the production of the staple crops. There are many fine farms in Courtland.

This is one of the earliest settled townships in the northern part of the county. The first entry of land we can find on the records was made by Alexander Deane, Sabin Johnson, Beman Brockway, William H. Cooper, Lucy Beers, and Burton Brockway, who entered Sections 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, and 27, respectively, the date of such entries being Aug. 10, 1839.

Barton Johnson, the first actual settler in the township, located in May, 1838. He was born in Schoharie county, New York, March 23, 1812. In October, 1834, he removed to Washtenaw County, Michigan, and entered 120 acres of land, where he lived until May, 1838, when he came to Courtland and squatted on the farm which he afterward entered. He was the first white settler in Courtland, and many were the hardships and inconveniences that he and his family suffered in the wild days of Kent county. Mr. Johnson was a voter at the organization of Courtland, and afterward held the offices of supervisor and township treasurer.

Alexander Deane settled in the township in 1839. He was one of the first six to locate lands and selected the northeast quarter of Section 21. The manner in which this tract came to be located by him is given as follows: Mr. Deane and fifteen others came into the country to select homes and lands, with the understanding that the right of first choice should be decided among them by lot. So they drew, and "lo and behold," the first chance fell upon Mr. Deane, and he therefore exercised the right of first choice by selecting the piece mentioned. The others located land contiguous to each other, and moving to the township a short time afterward, organized it and resided there alone for a number of years—or until about the year 1844 or 1845, when they were joined by Horace Colby, Philip Becker, the two Thompsons, and others. The first township meeting was held at the residence of Barton Johnson, in the spring of 1839.

Philip Becker was born in Schoharie County, New York, about 1824. He came to Michigan when nine years of age with his parents, who were among the pioneers of Washtenaw county. When but twenty years old he came to Kent county and traded a span of colts for 160 acres of land in Section 36, Courtland township. Although but twenty years old, he was married, and the first habitation of himself and young wife was a "shanty," whose only window was a hole in the wall with a white cloth thrown over it. The bedsteads were constructed of poles driven in the wall, with boards upon them. Indians oftentimes passed by, on their way to northern wilds, after visiting the village of Grand Rapids, where they filled up on fire water, and so loud were their whoops as to often frighten the settlers. Many



times they lay upon the kitchen floor of the Becker home. The nearest market in those days was Grand Rapids, to which Mr. Becker often walked, carrying home his purchase in a bandana handkerchief. The first school-house was of logs and the building was used as the first church, as well. Mr. Becker worked in a saw-mill for Smith Lapham in the village of Laphamville, near Rockford. He was economical and thrifty and in 1863 purchased an additional unimproved tract of 256 acres in Section 27. In 1875 his health failed and he visited the Pacific slope. The following year he erected a home in Rockford and there passed his remaining days, dying Jan. 19, 1881.

Below are given the names of some of the pioneers of this township, together with the date and location of their settlement, brief sketches, etc. No special attention is paid to the exact order in which they came—simply a record of the facts connected with their settlement. Among them were the following named persons: Thomas Addison, John Austin, Sabin Johnson, Benjamin Botsford, David Haynes, Lauren Austin, Iram Barnes, Anson Ensign, Philo Beers, James Kingin, the Rounds and Hunting families, Zenas B. White, and others.

Thomas Addison was born in North Duffield, England, in 1807. He came to America in a sailing vessel, about 1825, landing in New York City. He was married in the Empire State and later, while it was still a territory, came to Michigan, reaching Plainfield on a flat-boat, having come some distance down Grand River. From Plainfield he came to Courtland township, having but one dollar remaining. He was an ardent Democrat of the Jeffersonian school, and was the first clerk of Courtland, being present at the organization of the township. He was subsequently elected a justice of the peace, a position he filled with credit and honor. He died at his home in Courtland, June 12, 1875.

Sabin Johnson was a native of New York. He came to Michigan by the Erie Canal, Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan to Grand Haven. He first took up eighty acres of Government land in Section 22, upon which he erected a little board hut, which was his first habitation. He died at the age of 49 years, in Courtland, where he had been a blacksmith and wagonmaker, as well as a farmer.

James Kingin came from New York to Michigan, in 1844, and settled in Courtland township, being thus numbered among the early settlers. He died Feb. 16, 1875.

A list of Supervisors of Courtland township from its organization down to the present time is as follows: 1839, Philo Beers; 1842, Isaac Tower; 1843, Philo Beers; 1845, John Austin; 1847, Nelson Miles; 1848, Philo Beers; 1850, Fred W. Worden; 1851, Horatio N. Stinson; 1852, Philo Beers; 1853, Harry H. Kingin; 1854, Asa P. Ferry; 1856, Philo Beers; 1857, Isaac T. Worden; 1858, W. H. Myers; 1859, Jacob I. Stoner; 1860, Wheaton L. Hewitt; 1861, Calvin Thompson; 1862, William H. Myers; 1867, Barton Johnson; 1868, William H. Myers; 1878, Isaac M. Hunting; 1879, Charles M. Mann; 1880, Elias C. Brooks; 1881, Charles M. Mann; 1882, Fred Stegman; 1884, W. H. Myers; 1885, Simeon P. Peterson; 1887, William F. Woodworth; 1889, Charles H. Carlyle; 1891, W. T. Woodworth; 1893, Simon P. Peterson; 1894, S. D. Peterson; 1895, William Baldwin; 1897, Charles



Carlyle; 1898, James H. Parmeter; 1900, Morris N. Streeter; 1902, Fremont Thompson; 1903, Benjamin F. Shotwell; 1904, Frank J. Mason; 1905, James H. Parmeter; 1907, Perry J. Bennett; 1908, Charles H. Carlyle; 1912, William H. Myers; 1915, Frank W. Peterson; 1917, Calvin Thompson, present incumbent.

William H. Myers was born in Arklow, County Wicklow, Ireland, June 4, 1818, and when less than a year and a half old was brought to America by his parents, who landed at St. Johns, New Brunswick, and three months later moved to Philadelphia, but soon afterward settled in Cold Spring, on the Hudson River, New York. In 1830 the family removed to Michigan, Freedom, Washtenaw county, being selected as their home. When in his fifteenth year, Mr. Myers received his parents' consent to go out into the world and satisfy his craving for adventure. Accordingly, he secured a boy's berth on a Lake Michigan vessel, on which he spent three seasons. In 1837 he visited the upper Mississippi River country on a steamer conveying supplies to Forts Crawford and Snelling. He next went south to New Orleans and shipped on a voyage to Cuba. In 1840 he was steersman on the General Scott on Lake Erie. Back again to New Orleans, he went on the Alabama, conveying recruits to General Taylor, then fighting the Seminoles in Florida. Later he visited Maracaibo, Venezuela, Rio Janeiro, and Montevideo, South America, and the Falkland Islands. He made many subsequent voyages until 1845, spending about thirteen years on the water and having many interesting and exciting experiences. In 1847, tiring of that life, he came to Courtland township, where he entered 160 acres of unimproved land at the Government price of \$1.25 per acre. His first habitation was of logs; his agricultural implements were of the most primitive make; his household furniture was equally rude; his first meal in his new home was eaten from a board, each end of which rested on an empty barrel. From this beginning he developed a first-class farm from the wilderness and he became a man of note in the community. He sat on the Board of Supervisors for seventeen years, never quailing at most trying junctures to stand and act for what he deemed the best interests of all.

Calvin Thompson was born in the State of New York, but in early manhood came to Michigan. He was a pioneer settler of Courtland and developed a fine farm. He passed away in March, 1876.

Isaac Hunting was born in Dutchess county, New York, April 25, 1837; was thoroughly educated and for some years in his earlier manhood was a school teacher. In 1865 he came from New York direct to Courtland township, which was yet in the early days of its progress, and he here engaged in farming. He was one of those brave men who offered their services and their lives to their country in its hour of need, and enlisted, March 6, 1865, in Company F, Seventh Michigan cavalry, and was elected corporal. In October, 1865, however, he was transferred to Company B, First Michigan veteran cavalry, and was assigned to duty in the far west, where contests with the Indians were frequent and dangerous, and where the rigors of the climate and the severity of the service shattered his once vigorous health and strength and eventually caused his death. He was honorably discharged, March 10, 1866, when he returned to Courtland and



resumed the peaceful pursuits of civil life. He served as supervisor and also as township treasurer. His death took place, April 28, 1879.

Charles M. Mann was a native of New York City, although he was reared to manhood in Ontario County, New York. He was born, April 24, 1839, and lived in Ontario county until the spring of 1868, when he came to Kent county and purchased eighty acres of land in Courtland township. He was successful as a breeder of Merino sheep, having begun this special industry in 1885. He twice served the township as supervisor, leaving the office with a reputation as a safe man to attend to the public business.

Frederick C. Stegman was born in Germany, Nov. 5, 1829. He came to this country in 1849, and located in Oakland county, Michigan, where he was engaged working on a farm three years; and then he returned to Germany. In 1853 he again came to this country, settled in Kent county and purchased 160 acres of land in Section 16 of Courtland township and forty acres in Nelson township. He filled several positions of trust in Courtland township, among others that of treasurer for two or three years and supervisor two years. He died, highly respected by the community, March 9, 1889.

Simon P. Peterson was born in Jackson county, Michigan, June 7, 1838. He was about seven years of age when brought to Kent county, where he grew to manhood on his father's farm. He acquired a liberal education and for six winters taught school in Oakfield and Courtland townships; and many men and women still live in the neighborhood who were his pupils in their childhood. During the summer seasons he worked by the month at farm labor. He ably filled the offices of supervisor, highway commissioner and school inspector, in every instance to the entire satisfaction of the public.

William F. Woodworth was born in the town of Ovid, Seneca county, New York, May 8, 1852. He was reared to agricultural pursuits on his father's homestead. In May, 1881, he came from New York to Michigan and purchased 100 acres of partially improved land in Courtland township. He gave especial attention to sheep raising, Shropshire being his favorite. In 1891 he entered extensively into fruit growing. In 1898 he sold about 1,000 bushels of plums. In the raising of potatoes he was quite successful, having sold, in 1892, 5,000 bushels, and in 1896 about the same quantity. He served his township as supervisor in 1887 and in 1888, and again in 1891 and 1892, and for five years served as school director, taking great interest in public education.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### PARIS TOWNSHIP

WHEN CREATED — HIRAM H. ALLEN — PHYSICAL FEATURES — EARLY SETTLERS—TRIALS AND HARDSHIPS—ACCIDENTAL KILLING—ORGANIZATION OF THE TOWNSHIP—FIRST OFFICERS—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

This township was formed of territory included in the original township of Grand Rapids, which, at the time of its organization, extended to the southern boundary of the county. In 1839 the township

of Paris was created by an act of the State legislature, the territory to include also the present township of Gaines, and the first township meeting was held at the house of Hiram H. Allen.

Hiram H. Allen was born, May 14, 1804, in Williston, Chittenden county, Vermont. He came to Michigan, in the fall of 1830, and settled at Tecumseh, Lenawee county, purchasing 160 acres of land, on which he resided seven and a half years, when he sold it and purchased 400 acres in Paris township, Kent county. After the organization of the township he served as justice of the peace thirty-five years, supervisor several terms and as superintendent of the county poor ten years. It is said that as justice of the peace he joined in marriage about sixty couples. Mr. Allen's grandfather was cousin to Ethan Allen, of Ticonderoga fame, and his stepmother was sister to the great preacher, Lorenzo Dow. Two of his father's brothers were soldiers in the Revolution and he himself, as a boy of nine or ten years, was an eye witness to the naval engagement on Lake Champlain in the War of 1812, for that purpose climbing to the top of a beech tree overlooking the lake.

The surface of the township, in common with a good portion of the territory embraced within the county, is level and in some places slightly rolling. The soil is quite good, having some poor land as well as other townships, but, considered as a whole, it is considerably above the average. The soil in the southeasterly and central parts is heavy clay, while in the northerly and westerly parts it is sandy, and it produces the finest crops of grain and vegetables known to this part of the State. There is very little waste land in the township, and the condition of the farms, buildings, and surroundings are indicative of thrift and prosperity. As a grain-growing and stock-raising township it is not excelled in the county, and it is also noted for its heavy yield of fine grass. What is known as Plaster creek and other small streams form the drainage system of the township.

The township of Paris was mainly covered with timber, especially in the southeasterly and central parts, where it was originally quite heavy; but that in the northerly and westerly parts was light, and what was called oak openings. In the southwesterly part of the township was some pine, in places mixed with elm, black ash, etc. Some of the choicest timber was used for building, making rails, and sawing into lumber, but much of it which would now be very valuable was burned in clearing the land.

In point of settlement, Paris is next to the oldest township in the county. As long ago as the year 1833, Barney Burton, Edward Guild, Joel Guild, Daniel Guild, and James Vanderpool located within its present limits.

Alexander H. Clark and Abram Laraway settled in the year 1835; Jacob Patterson, Miner Patterson, James Patterson, Orleans Spaulding, and Philanzo Bowen, in the year 1837; Nicholas Carlton in the year 1837, and Hiram H. Allen in the year 1838.

Alexander H. Clark was born in Trenton, N. J., May 21, 1804. He came to Michigan, in 1828, and settled in Wayne county, purchasing forty acres of land, but a year later he sold it and went to Plymouth, purchased forty acres, and again sold out, and this time went to Superior, Washtenaw county. Three years later he settled in Paris, and in 1836 purchased 160 acres in Section 14. A year later



he sold his claim and purchased 160 acres in Sections 8 and 9. He was one of the earliest if not the first white settler in the present limits of the township. He afterward lived in Gaines about thirty years, but returned to Paris and purchased 106 acres on Section 30. Mr. Clark adhered to Greenback doctrines, politically. He served as justice of the peace fourteen years, township clerk three years, and supervisor three years.

The Pattersons came from Steuben county, New York, and in 1828 settled in Washtenaw county, Michigan, where the father died, in 1831. The mother, with five boys to rear, educate, and fit for the responsibilities of the future, proved equal to the emergency and continued the management of the homestead six years, when she came with her family to Paris township and purchased forty acres of land in Section 13, where she spent the remainder of her life. The first two years after her removal to this county she herself labored for wages. Her energy was wonderful and her perseverance indomitable, and with the aid of her sons she paid for her land and spread its borders until the tract in the possession of the family included 350 acres. Her sons all settled near her and she was to the end of her life, March 1, 1864, their wise counsellor and most judicious friend.

Among the other early settlers were DeWitt Shoemaker, Clinton Shoemaker, Robert I. Shoemaker, Alvin H. Wansey, Jared Wansey, James Ballard, Stephen Hinsdill, and Robert Barr.

James Ballard, who came in 1838 from Vermont, was especially a representative Congregational minister and school teacher here. He went upon a farm in Paris in an early day, and cultivated it many years, coming to town regularly on his duties, clerical and scholastic. He was a native of Massachusetts and a graduate of Williams College. During several years after the war he labored as a teacher among the Freedmen of the Southern States.

Stephen Hinsdill was a descendant of a family of sturdy Yorkshire "dalesmen," who came from England near the end of the Seventeenth century and settled in Connecticut. Before coming to Michigan he had been engaged in wool manufacture in Vermont, where he was one of those who suffered by the great financial revulsion of 1837; but, possessed of the energetic and persevering spirit of his ancestors, he came to Grand Rapids with the determination to try again. After living a few years in Paris township, in 1843 he set up machinery for wool carding, cloth dressing and the making of satinets in one end of the building then known as the "big mill," on the east bank of the river, a short distance above Michigan street, and the early settlers of the valley rejoiced over the prospect of having a good home market for wool. His factory was in operation in 1844, with several looms running, and the business was continued by himself or under leases for several years. Mr. Hinsdill died in 1848, and his "Grand Rapids Woolen Factory" was afterward purchased by Truman H. Lyon, who continued it for some years.

Among the old settlers of Paris township special mention should also be made of "Captain" Davis, as he was familiarly called, and who was the father of Ezekiel W. Davis, commonly known in his day as "Judge." "Captain" Davis settled in the township in the year 1834, and remained a resident up to the time of his death, which occurred about 1845.



The trials and hardships endured by the pioneers of those days seem to have been unusual. Nearly all of the settlers were poor, and consequently were unable to relieve the more serious distress of the less fortunate among them. The lots of some were peculiarly distressing. Orleans Spaulding, who was before mentioned as having settled in 1836, informed an earlier writer that, in the month of June, 1837, he was afflicted with sore eyes, and that for six years he was thereby unfitted for labor. During three years of that time he was totally blind, and that, too, while his family was dependent upon the productions of their little farm for a living. But there were trials of a general nature which had to be endured at this period, occasioned by the "hard times," or "wild cat times," as they were commonly called. Many of the new settlers had but a small part of their farms cleared, and a still smaller part cultivated, and consequently were obliged to buy their provisions. Those who had been in the country longer, and had larger improvements, raised a few bushels of wheat more than was required for their own use, but they could sell it neither for money nor for groceries. Usually it could be given in exchange for "shelf goods," as they were called, provided that no more than 50 cents per bushel was charged. While wheat was selling at only 50 cents per bushel, flour was selling at \$15 per barrel, pork \$36 per barrel, potatoes \$2 per bushel, and butter 50 cents per pound.

Mrs. Barney Burton informed the same previous writer that when she commenced keeping house in Paris township, on what later became well known as the Garfield farm, she had no neighbors on the south nearer than Gull Prairie, none on the east nearer than Ionia, and none whatever on the west. Uncle Louis Campau, Joel Guild, and Jonathan F. Chubb were the only residents of Grand Rapids. Rix Robinson was in the township of Ada, trading among the Indians. Mr. Burton built the first log house in the township of Paris, and he erected the first barn in the county. He also erected the first frame house in the township, upon the aforementioned Garfield farm. The following incident illustrates the condition of the country at an early day. When Mr. Burton was on his way from Gull Prairie to Grand Rapids, one night, he and his few companions halted, as usual, hobbled their horses and took their rest. In the morning the horses belonging to Mr. Burton were nowhere to be seen, so he started out in search of them. He wandered about in the thick woods for several hours, without success, and finally turned about with the intention of returning to the camp. He traveled until the sun was low in the west, and no camp could be found. Night came on, and he rested himself, a lost man in a dense forest. The experience of the succeeding day was similar to that of the first, and it was not until the third day that he reached a settlement. By following a creek which he found in his wanderings, he reached the Thornapple river, tracing which to its mouth brought him to what is now the village of Ada. Thence he proceeded to Grand Rapids, where he found the settlers quite excited over the fact of his disappearance, which had been reported by his companions, and Mr. Campau had already dispatched a number of Indians in the direction he supposed Mr. Burton would be, to search for him.

At one time in the winter of the years 1835 and 1836, the cries of what was supposed to be a man were heard in the vicinity of Mr.



Burton's residence. He was answered, horns were blown, and other noises made to attract his attention, with no result. About the same time a gray horse came to the residence of Abram Laraway, not many miles away, which none of the settlers claimed. Early in the spring a saddle was found by Robert Barr in the woods not far away. Still later the body of a man was found near where the Oak Hill cemeteries are now located, in the southeastern part of the city. Its appearance indicated that death had taken place some months previously. A few dollars in money, a watch, and some papers were found on his person, the latter indicating the name of the man to have been Moore. Nothing further was ever ascertained in regard to the matter. He probably lost his way in the pathless woods, wandered about for several days, perhaps lost his horse, and finally starved to death; or, overcome with weariness, sank down to rest and perished by the excessive cold.

It is related that in the year 1835 or 1836, a man by the name of Sizer was shot by an Indian, near Plaster creek. At that place on the creek was a deer lick, which of course was watched by the early settlers, as well as by the natives. The parties concerned in the affair to which we refer were both looking for deer, the one not knowing of the presence of the other. As the white man was moving about in the bushes, the eye of the Indian caught a glimpse of his white shirt bosom, which he mistook to be a spot upon a deer about to run. A second more and the white man fell dead with a bullet through his heart. The terror of the Indian can be imagined when he discovered what he had done, as he supposed his own life must pay the forfeit. It seems to have been the custom of the Indians to demand a life for a life. But in this instance the Indian went immediately to the missionary, Mr. Slater, who lived on the west side of the river, related the happening and gave himself up. Mr. Slater advised him to go back, arouse the whites and tell them what he had done, and assured him that he would not be punished. He did as he was advised, and the affair there ended.

During the first few years of early settlement there was no regular camp of Indians in the township. Occasionally they would pitch their tents for a few days on their hunting and fishing excursions, but the first regular colony was formed about the year 1840, on or near Section 33. They lived there for several years, but when the county became more thoroughly settled they sold their lands and left. They were very tenacious of their "happy hunting grounds," in this part of the country at least.

At the organization of the township, in 1839, the following gentlemen were selected as the first corps of officials: Supervisor, Joel Guild; clerk, Hiram H. Allen; treasurer, Robert Barr; assessors, Stephen Hinsdill, Foster Kelley, and Joseph H. Blain; justices of the peace, H. H. Allen, Hezekiah B. Smith, Barney Burton, and Alexander Clark; commissioners of highways, Joseph Blain, Jacob Patterson, and John Kirkland; school inspectors, James Ballard, Rensselaer Mesnard, and Joseph K. Palmer; directors of the poor, Andrew Mesnard and Daniel Guild; collector, Jacob Patterson; constables, Jacob Patterson, Joseph J. Baxter, and Palmer Allen.

John Kirkland came here in 1837, and after a few years devoted to farming in Paris township, established a cooper shop near South



Division street, where he made barrels by hand. He lived to be nearly eighty years old, and died greatly beloved.

Joseph J. Baxter came from Vermont. He was a carpenter and millwright, and was among the pioneer wagon makers. Later he was in the livery business, grocery and feed trade, and bed spring making, successively. In 1843 he built a house which was standing, until a comparatively few years ago, at the corner of Fountain and North Division streets.

The first school-house erected in the township stood on the corner of the northeast quarter of Section 7, now included within the boundaries of the city of Grand Rapids. It was used for many years. All of the school buildings in the township at the present time are above the average character of such buildings.

The county infirmary is located in Paris, on Section 16. The farm contains about 144 acres, and has the appearance of being well cultivated. At the time of the original purchase by the county, a log house was standing on it, and this was used for a number of years as the infirmary building. It was removed in 1860, a fine frame building was erected in its stead, and since then a great many improvements have been made, so that now it is a commodious and nicely appointed institution.

The Bostwick grist and saw mills were erected many years ago on Plaster creek, on the east line of Section 17. Four dams were constructed at different times, but in each instance they were carried away by the current in times of high water. The mills were thus only able to run at intervals, and never for any great length of time, and they were finally abandoned. The Tanner mills, situated on the southeast corner of Section 20, were operated for a number of years, but have long since been numbered among the things of the past.

Paris is settled by a sturdy American citizenship, and from their ranks have come many of the leading business men and some of the prominent officials of the county. Although not especially favored by nature, the township enjoys the distinction of being one of the best agricultural townships in Kent county. Its soil is adapted to diversified farming and fruit growing, in which pursuits, combined with stock raising, the intelligent and industrious farmers have met with phenomenal success. The pleasant homes and thrifty surroundings are abundant proof of this, while an occasional handsome mansion, with modern improvements and appliances, affirms the conclusion that even in this favored land, some have been more successful than their worthy rivals.

Following is a list of the Supervisors of Paris township from its organization down to the present time: 1839, Joel Guild; 1840, James A. Davis; 1841, Foster Kelly; 1842, Hiram H. Allen; 1843, Stephen Hinsdill; 1844, James A. Davis; 1845, Clinton Shoemaker; 1846, James A. Davis; 1847, Benjamin F. Freeman; 1848, William S. Parsons; 1850, Sluman S. Bailey; 1852, James A. Davis; 1853, Sluman S. Bailey; 1855, Timothy S. Smith; 1856, Hiram H. Allen; 1857, Timothy S. Smith; 1859, Sluman S. Bailey; 1861, Timothy S. Smith; 1863, Samuel M. Garfield; 1866, Timothy S. Smith; 1867, Isaac D. Davis; 1868, Horace Henshaw; 1869, John P. Wykes; 1870, Samuel M. Garfield; 1873, Wright C. Allen; 1874, Samuel Langdon; 1876, Christian



P. Friend; 1878, Samuel Langdon; 1879, Jerome E. Phillips; 1880, Christian P. Friend; 1883, Jerome E. Phillips; 1885, Hugo B. Rathbun; 1886, Everett Hurd; 1888, Jerome E. Phillips; 1889, Fremont E. Skeels; 1891, Connor H. Smith; 1894, W. T. Adams; 1896, L. I. McCrath; 1898, W. T. Shafer; 1907, Robert B. Patterson; 1914, Henry Simerink, present incumbent.

William S. Parsons was a native of Dover, Me., and came to Michigan in 1837, settling in Paris township in 1844. He there purchased eighty acres of land on Section 5, now within the limits of the city of Grand Rapids, and afterward increased his real estate holdings until at the time of his death, Aug. 2, 1877, he owned 200 acres. He was active in all public matters in his township, especially in school interests, and served as supervisor two years.

Sluman S. Bailey came into Paris, in 1846, and lived on a farm there fourteen years, when he moved into Grand Rapids. He was born at Somerset, Niagara county, New York, Dec. 14, 1821. Farming was his favorite occupation, but he was a busy man in public as well as private life, in various town offices, also as sheriff, and fifteen years as collector of internal revenue.

Isaac D. Davis was born in Oswego county, New York, Dec. 27, 1818. With his parents he came to Michigan, in 1820, and settled in Oakland county, and the same year his father was elected sheriff. The latter died the following year and his wife and son returned to New York. In 1836 Isaac came with his uncle to Grand Rapids, then a hamlet with eighteen houses. At the age of twenty-one he purchased eighty acres of land in Section 3 of what later became Paris township, but ten years later sold that tract and purchased eighty acres in Section 29, where he resided the remainder of his life. Mr. Davis was elected supervisor in 1867, and he also served as township clerk two years.

Wright C. Allen was born in the village of Tecumseh, Lenawee county, July 22, 1831. His father was Hiram H. Allen, already given mention in this chapter. The son was reared to agricultural pursuits, early took an interest in civic affairs, and succeeded his father as justice of the peace, discharging the duties of that office with satisfaction to all concerned for a number of years. He was also called to other positions, including those of township treasurer and constable, and in 1873 was elected supervisor of Paris township.

Samuel Langdon was born in Wethersfield, Wyoming county, New York, Jan. 22, 1832. His father died in 1848, and though but sixteen years old the son took charge of the home farm and managed it five years. At the age of eighteen he began to teach school, teaching winter terms, and in 1853 decided to come to Michigan. On reaching this State he settled in Kalamazoo county on 120 acres of openings, which he mainly cleared himself, and he also taught school five or six winters. In 1871 Mr. Langdon secured a farm of 150 acres near Bowen Station in Paris township and resided there the remainder of his life. In 1881 he was made president of the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company, of Kent county, and occupied that position for more than twenty years. He was elected supervisor of Paris township, by a union of various elements, and served three years in that position.

Jerome E. Phillips was born Dec. 30, 1838, in Newfane, Niagara county, New York. He was engaged in farming in his native State until 1868, when he came to Paris township and purchased 150 acres of land in Section 19, where he spent the remainder of his life. He served as school moderator three years, justice of the peace a number of years, and was supervisor of Paris township four years.

Hugo B. Rathbun was born, Nov. 30, 1841, in Owasco, Cayuga county, New York. He came with his parents to Michigan in 1844. He enlisted as a soldier in the Civil war, Sept. 11, 1861, in Company D, Second Michigan cavalry, and at the expiration of his period of enlistment—three years—was honorably discharged, but re-enlisted the same day as a veteran and was commissioned lieutenant. He was ultimately discharged in February, 1865. He followed farming in Paris township from 1869 until his death, which occurred May 30, 1898. He served as township treasurer, and in 1885 was elected supervisor.

Everett Hurd was born in Dutchess county, New York, Dec. 19, 1826. He came with his parents to Paris township in 1843 and lived there the remainder of his life. He served as township treasurer ten years, and in 1886 was elected supervisor, being re-elected in 1887.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### CALEDONIA TOWNSHIP

PHYSICAL FEATURES—ORGANIZATION—FIRST OFFICERS—FIRST ENTRY OF LAND—WILLIAM H. BROWN—KENT'S TAVERN—DIFFICULTIES OF TRAVEL—EDWARD CAMPAU—VILLAGE OF ALASKA—CALEDONIA—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

This township, territorially, corresponds with a Congressional township, as do all but six of the townships of Kent county. It occupies a portion of the Thornapple River Valley. The surface is generally rolling, and several streams of running water and numerous springs contribute to the fertility of the soil, and form an abundant supply for stock and other purposes, and the township is admirably adapted to all classes of diversified agriculture. The principal stream is Thornapple river, which drains the township from the southeast portion to the northward, and the other streams contribute to the facilities for grazing, an industry which is well represented in connection with general farming and fruit growing. The banks of the river are high and the country on both sides of the river is high and rolling. On the east side of the river the land is what is known as "openings," the soil being sandy and gravelly with a slight mixture of clay, and was originally timbered principally with oak and hickory. The soil on this side of the river is especially adapted to wheat and fruit, but produces good crops of all kinds of grain and most grasses.

The township is, of course, rectangular in shape, bounded on the north by Cascade, on the east by Bowne, on the south by Barry county, and on the west by Gaines township. Like all other territory in the county, the system of Congressional survey is regular, the land being



described by the section and quarter section system, and the township contains thirty-six sections, comprising 23,040 acres. As has been stated, the territory was originally covered with an abundant growth of excellent timber, and these desirable features early attracted crowds of immigrants, who had followed the original pioneers into the new country.

There are several lakes on the east side of the river. There is a lake, known as Campau Lake, on Sections 1, 2, 11, and 12, about one mile long and from eighty to 160 rods in width. The shore on the southeast side is sandy and on the northwest side mucky and marshy. Barber's Lake is on the line of Sections 25 and 26. Tobey's Lake is on Section 23. Buck Lake is on Section 12. Coldwater River enters the township on Section 36 and empties into Thornapple River on Section 35. The west side of Thornapple River was all "timbered lands," producing all of the kinds of timber that usually grow in this region on such lands. The surface of most of this part of the town is high and somewhat rolling, with a clayey loam soil that is well adapted to all kinds of farming purposes, especially to grazing. All kinds of fruits grow almost to perfection on this soil. There are a great many fine farms in this township.

Caledonia was organized as a separate township in 1840, from territory originally included in the township of Ada, and the definite boundaries then provided by the State legislature have never been modified or changed. The first election for township officers was held at the dwelling house of John P. McNaughton, May 4, 1840, with Justus G. Beach as moderator and Malcolm McNaughton as clerk, and resulted in the selection of the following named persons: John P. McNaughton, supervisor; Justus G. Beach, clerk; Roswell F. Tyler, Malcolm P. McNaughton, and John A. Campbell, assessors; Roswell F. Tyler, collector; Roswell Tyler and John Campbell, directors of the poor; Asahel Tyler, Asahel Kent, and Norman Foster, commissioners of highways; Roswell F. Tyler and Frederick B. Thompson, constables; Justus G. Beach, Loren B. Tyler, Malcolm P. McNaughton, and Asahel Kent, justices of the peace; Norman Foster, treasurer; Norman Foster and William G. Wooley, school inspectors. The record does not state the number of votes polled at the township meeting. It was voted to raise \$100 to defray township expenses for the year 1841-2, and also that the pay of township officers should be \$1 for each day's service.

When the first white man visited the township of Caledonia it was an unbroken wilderness, inhabited only by the red men and their dusky families. The only roads were the trails made by the Indians in going from lake to lake, and around their borders. These trails in many places were a foot in depth, and not much more than a foot in width. The only houses were their wigwams, built on the banks of the beautiful lakes in summer, and in the thick wood in winter, and thus the inmates were protected from the cold.

The first piece of land bought of the Government in this township was a portion of Section 3, by William H. Brown, June 16, 1835, and the next tract was taken up by Benjamin H. Silsbee, on July 8, 1835, and was a portion of Section 35.

William H. Brown was born in Warwick, Kent county, Rhode Island, in the year 1810. In early manhood he went with his parents



to Genesee county, New York, and at a very early day in the history of Western Michigan came to Thornapple, Barry county, and entered 100 acres of land. Becoming dissatisfied, he hired an Indian chief to take him down Thornapple river on a prospecting tour, with the result that he selected the tract of land which was so long his home in Caledonia township. In 1853 he built a grist-mill at Alaska and operated it for a number of years. In 1868 he erected a flouring mill at Caledonia Center, now known as La Barge, its construction costing him \$14,000, and he also built a saw-mill at that place. He built two saw-mills at Alaska soon after his settlement there. The original name of the town was Brownsville, and it was founded and settled by Mr. Brown. He was one of the organizers of the Baptist church at that place and was deacon at the time of his death, which occurred Oct. 14, 1877, after a period of protracted illness.

Asahel Kent was the first settler in the township, settling on Section 35, in 1838. Mr. Kent, and after his death Mrs. Kent, kept a public house, or tavern, as the inns or hotels of those days were commonly called, which became famous for its good cheer all over the surrounding country. A gentleman who lived at that time in New York State, was wont to tell that he used to hear people who had been in the Grand River Valley tell about "Kent's Tavern," and when one would return, others who had traveled on this route—the "Gull Trail"—would always enquire about the Kents. Mrs. Kent afterward married Peter McNaughton, and the place became equally well known to travelers on the Battle Creek and Grand Rapids stage route as McNaughton's. There are some reminiscences of this stage route which Edward Campau related that at this time will help contrast the mode of traveling in those days with that of the present. Mr. Campau related that in 1839, as a boy of 14 years, he made the journey with three or four others from Grand Rapids to Detroit, and that they stopped at "Kent's" over night, and that he with others of the men had to sleep out in a sort of shed, as the house was so small it would not accommodate them. At this time this was the only house from Ada to "Leonard's," a distance of seventeen miles. About two years after this he commenced to drive stage on this route and drove for several years. The road at this time wound around through the woods and it was no uncommon thing to get "stuck" in the mud or to "tip over." At one time, a very dark, stormy night, an axletree was broken about six miles south of Ada, and the passengers, five or six in number, were compelled to walk through mud and snow to that place, as it was the nearest settlement. At another time, Hon. John Ball, Mrs. Thomas B. Church, and others were in the stage, when they tipped over in a mud-hole and the passengers were all dumped in the water. It was quite dark and Mrs. Church's son, Fred S., who afterwards became the well known New York artist, but who then was an infant, was nearly suffocated before they found him. At another time Hon. William A. Richmond and Hon. Harvey P. Yale were his only passengers, and the roads were muddy and badly rutted, and the night was dark. Mr. Yale fell asleep and the wheel, dropping into a deep rut, pitched him out into the mud. After a hearty laugh he resumed his place and they continued their journey. There is a



great contrast between travel over that route, as it was in those days, and on the well piked roads of today with a Twentieth century automobile!

But to go back to the settlement of Caledonia: James Minsey settled on Section 36 in 1838 or 1839. Among the earlier settlers were Orsemus Rathbun, Eber Moffitt, Hiram McNiel, Peter McNaughton, Levi Tobey, John Sinclair, O. P. Barber, John Pattison, Henry Jackson, and Warren S. Hale.

Edward Campau, heretofore mentioned as the youthful stage driver, was also a pioneer settler in Caledonia. He was born in Detroit, May 9, 1825. His parents removed to Grosse Point, on Lake St. Clair, when he was five years old, and there, in 1838, his mother died and he soon afterward came to Grand Rapids, where he lived three years with his Aunt Supernant and his uncle Louis Moran. In the spring of 1842, in company with his cousin, Antoine Campau, he set out on a trading expedition among the Indians on the Grand river and its tributaries, exhibiting in this enterprise the inherent traits which so strongly characterize the Campau family. On his return he entered the employ of Canton Smith, proprietor of the old National Hotel, as porter and chore-boy, at \$8 per month. In December following he obtained a position as stage driver on the old Grand Rapids & Kalamazoo stage route, and continued that employment four years, receiving \$10 and \$12 a month. He then engaged with William H. Withey in the same capacity and remained until the line was transferred to the plank road. At the close of his stage driving career, in 1855, he purchased sixty-three acres of land in Section 11, Caledonia township, and began his career as a pioneer farmer, experiencing all the effort and hardship necessary to convert the wilderness into blooming, productive fields.

O. B. Barber was born in Auburn, N. Y., Nov. 8, 1820. He was reared on a farm and educated in the common school. In 1838 he went to Galesburg, Ill., and two years later to Macoupin County, that State, where he remained until February, 1849, coming then to Caledonia, where he purchased a farm of 114 acres in Section 26, on the old Battle Creek & Grand Rapids stage route, then the sole thoroughfare of the forest. Soon after his settlement here he was elected assessor and highway commissioner, and afterward officiated as township treasurer one year, drain commissioner five years, and justice of the peace sixteen years. He was appointed postmaster at Caledonia, in 1861, and retained the position eighteen years.

Lyman Gerould was the first settler on the west side of Thornapple River.

Among the incidents connected with the early settlement of the township, showing some of the hardships the pioneers had to endure, the following is related: William H. Brown, previous to his settlement at Brownsville, now called Alaska, but after he located his land, lived at "Scale's Prairie," or Middleville. Having occasion to go there one winter he started from home in the morning on horseback, intending to return the same day. After making his observations and examining his land about where the village of Alaska now stands, he started for home. Night soon came on, and after endeavoring to follow his track for a while he found out that he was lost. He dismounted, and as he had nothing to kindle a fire with, cleared the snow



out of a path with his feet and some bark from a dry tree, and walked forwards and backwards in it all night. When morning came he mounted his horse and after riding for some time came out at the Green Lake House. His friends had started after him in the morning, expecting to find him frozen to death, and they followed his tracks until they found him at Green Lake, in Allegan County, nearly a dozen miles from his home.

At the mouth of Coldwater river was a great Indian camping ground and burial place. The Indians did not leave there entirely until a comparatively recent date. One of them, old Soh-na-go, or "Squirrel," was seen at quite a late day visiting the burial place and the hunting grounds of his fathers, but the "white man's axe" had been there and it was no longer a home for him.

Nestled among the hills on the banks of the Thornapple river, in the northern part of the township, is what was once the thriving little village of Alaska, formerly known as North Brownsville. It has a very pleasant location and was an active, enterprising place and center of an extensive trade until the railroads, passing on each side of it and building up rival towns, gave it a quietus. It now has but one general store and a grocery store. The site possesses one of the finest mill privileges there is on Thornapple river, and if circumstances had been more favorable it doubtless would have continued to be the location of a thriving and growing village.

Caledonia, situated on Section 29, is a prosperous village of 600 people. It was settled in 1850, the first plat was made in 1870, and it reached the dignity of an incorporated municipality in 1888. It is situated on the Michigan Central railroad and hence has good shipping facilities which make it the center of trade for a wide extent of fertile country. It has one Methodist and two United Brethren churches, a bank, and a weekly newspaper, the News, and the requisite number of mercantile establishments and general industries.

The township of Caledonia is one of the best agricultural districts in Kent county, and the thrifty farmers are profitably engaged in all classes of diversified farming. Considerable attention is given to the raising of fine stock, and some are buyers and shippers of the same. A very large portion of the grain raised is fed to stock on the farms. There are many fine homes in the township, an evidence of thrift and prosperity, and a great change has been brought about in the seventy-nine years since the first log cabin was built—the first move from savage to civilized life. The log cabins have gone and beautiful structures have taken their places.

Below is given a list of the supervisors of the township from its organization down to the present time: 1840, John P. McNaughton; 1842, Norman Foster; 1844, Roswell F. Tyler and William Gibson; 1845, John A. Cornell; 1846, Justus G. Beach; 1848, Reuben H. Smith; 1849, William H. Brown; 1854, Lyman Gerould; 1857, Zabin Williams; 1858, William H. Brown; 1860, Warren S. Hale; 1861, William H. Brown; 1863, William J. Wood; 1865, Adam B. Sherk; 1868, William J. Wood; 1869, Marcus Buell; 1870, Adam B. Sherk; 1871, Robert S. Jackson; 1872, William J. Wood; 1873, Martin Whitney; 1877, Austin W. Hill; 1878, Marcus Buell; 1879, Sherman T. Colson; 1889, Alfred W. Stow; 1891, Sherman T. Colson; 1895, Eugene Ward; 1900, Joseph E. Kennedy; 1901, Alfred Newman; 1904, Eugene



Ward; 1906, Alfred Newman; 1907, Frederick W. Ruehs; 1912, Merrill M. Kriger; 1914, John J. Luneke; 1915, Charles R. Mulder, present incumbent.

William J. Wood was born in Cayuga county, New York, Nov. 5, 1818. He lived on a farm until he was seventeen years of age, when he learned the joiner's trade and worked at it thirty-one years. The family removed to Livingston county, New York, when he was ten years old, and in April, 1857, he came to Caledonia township and settled on Section 24. He engaged in clearing and improving his land and interested himself in aiding and comforting his pioneer neighbors. It fell to his lot to help most when death made havoc among the settlers, and he provided the community with coffins at the bare expense of the material, without charge for time or labor. In 1863 and 1864 he was a member of the Board of Supervisors and during that time had charge of the families of thirty-one soldiers. He also served as supervisor in 1868 and again in 1872.

Marcus Buell was born in Angelica, Allegany county, New York, April 19, 1829. He learned the trade of carpenter and joiner, at which he worked nine years. He enlisted in the civil conflict, Aug. 17, 1861, in Company A, Ninth Michigan Infantry, and was on duty in the detached brigade of the Army of the Cumberland. He was in the battles of Chattanooga and Murfreesboro, and at the last named place, on July 13, 1862, received five bullet wounds. He spent some time in Hospital No. 8, and was transferred thence to Camp Chase, receiving his honorable discharge, Aug. 7, 1862, when he returned to Romeo, Mich., where he had settled in 1852. He came to Caledonia, locating on eighty acres in Section 11, in April, 1867.

Joseph E. Kennedy was born in Mifflin county, Pennsylvania, April 11, 1864, and was three years of age when his parents came to Gaines township, Kent county, and settled on a farm in the woods, with a log shanty as their first habitation. He remained with his parents until nineteen years old and then made a trip through Missouri, Kansas, and other States. In February, 1886, he began the hardware trade in Grand Rapids, built a store in Caledonia the same year, and moved to it in November, 1886. He built the large brick block, with its public hall, in Caledonia village, besides many residences. A Democrat in politics, Mr. Kennedy served as township treasurer of Caledonia, and in 1898 was a candidate for sheriff of the county, running ahead of his ticket 2,700 votes, but he was defeated in the general landslide of that year. In 1900 he served as Supervisor for Caledonia township.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CANNON TOWNSHIP

SOIL AND PRODUCTION—EARLY SETTLERS—ORIGIN OF NAME—ORGANIZATION AND FIRST OFFICIALS—JARED S. SPRING—CANNONSBURG—CHAUNCEY—LAKES—PROSPECT HILL—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

The prevailing soil of Cannon township is deep and pliable. Crops, in quality and yield, compare favorably with any of the other townships. The railroad facilities consist of the Grand Rapids & Indiana railroad, which passes near its northwestern corner, and a



nearby station in Algoma and Plainfield townships—Rockford. The township presents a great variety of surface, soil and productions, being quite hilly and broken along Bear creek and in the vicinity of Grand river, but in other parts, more gently rolling or beautifully undulating scenery meets the view. In the southern part there are patches of beech and maple timber land, with a sprinkling of pine along the streams, but mainly the town was originally oak openings, plentifully interspersed with hickory. Its main staples raised for the market are wheat, wool, corn, and apples. Of the first named, large quantities have been exported, and its rolling lands and dry, healthful climate make its wool growing a success. Lying within the great western fruit belt, it is eminently adapted to horticultural pursuits. Of this its people are fully aware and many flourishing orchards are found. Apples, pears, peaches, cherries, and currants abound, while grapes and the small fruits are specialties. Whatever may be said of its business centers, thrift and enterprise mark this rural district. Comfort smiles from its tasteful dwellings, nestled amid shade and bloom, and an abounding plenty peeps from its well filled and commodious barns. Indigence is scarcely known among its population. All are, to a remarkable degree, independent in worldly goods.

One of the earliest settlers was Andrew Watson, who moved into the township with his family, accompanied by A. D. W. Stout and family, and settled on Section 30. The first entry of land was made by James S. Potter, in Section 30, on July 15, 1835, but he did not become a permanent settler. In 1838 came Isaac Tomlinson, Sr., locating upon Section 27 in a beautiful situation commanding an extensive and enchanting view of Grand river and its beautiful valley. In 1839 William M. Miller settled upon Section 19. Steadily now a tide of immigration set in, rolling the wilderness back by the sturdy energy of the hardy and determined pioneer, swiftly multiplying farms and broadening cleared areas. Prominent among the newcomers, in 1841, were James Thomas, on Section 20, Oliver Lovejoy, on Section 7, Zebulon Rood and Rev. Mr. Frieze, on Section 19, the last named being the first minister of the Gospel to take up his residence within the township.

James Thomas was born in Northumberland county, Pennsylvania, Jan. 1, 1814. His mother died when he was four years old and he was bound to Joseph R. Priestly. Their affairs were managed by the outside jury—the neighbors—and Mr. Thomas lived to regret the severing of his relations with his real friend, Mr. Priestly. He learned the blacksmith's trade and after six months went home and commenced working on a canal. He was taken ill, and after recovery went to boating, working hard and saving nothing, going to school in the winter and doing chores to pay his way. In 1834 he came to Michigan, and in 1841 settled on Section 20, the southwest eighty acres, and in 1865 sold this tract to his son and purchased on Section 27. In 1867 he purchased a blacksmith shop. Mr. Thomas was the fifth settler in the township, and his experiences with Indians and pioneer life rank with the "oft told tale."

Zebulon Rood was born in Vermont, July 29, 1810. In 1823, with his parents, he came to Oakland county, Michigan, and there



remained until he was of age. He worked at the carpenter's trade three years and conducted a grocery in Birmingham two years. In 1838 he came to Cannon township and pre-empted land in Section 31, and subsequently purchased 240 acres on Sections 20 and 29. He cut the first road in Cannon and brought the first team and first wagon-load of goods across Bear creek. He built the first house in Cannon, and it was a log structure. He did the first clearing and planted the first crops. In fact, Mr. Rood broke the forest and led the tide of immigration in among the race of savages to make the now prosperous township of Cannon. He organized the first school district and helped build the first school house. He located all the roads in that portion of the township and aided in all its first improvements. In early days he served in the various local offices of the township.

Among the early settlers who bore a conspicuous part in the development and organization of the new township, honorable mention should be made of M. A. Patrick, locating on Section 26, and Ebenezer C. Smith, on Section 12, in 1844. About the same time Samuel Steel located five lots for as many sons, in the near vicinity of Mr. Smith, thus fixing the name of Steel's Corners to a most beautiful and productive part of the township. Mrs. John Hartwell, on Section 34, and Demas Hine, on Section 30, were settlers of 1845, and James Dockeray, on Section 4, settled in 1846.

Demas Hine was born in Connecticut, in August, 1804, and was reared a farmer. Later he became a physician of some prominence, came to Cannon township in 1845, and practiced his profession there until his death, April 25, 1872. He was one of the earliest, if not actually the first, physician to locate in Cannon township.

The township was named at the time of its organization, in 1846, in honor of its principal village, or rather the promoter of that village—LeGrand Cannon, an Eastern capitalist. In 1845 a separation from Plainfield was effected and the township was erected into a separate town under the name, by a mistake in the legislature, of Churchtown. The first town meeting, to complete the organization of the township, was held on the first Monday of April, 1846, at the house of C. Slaght, in Cannonsburg. The whole number of votes cast was sixty-four, and the following gentlemen were selected as the first township officers: Supervisor, Andrew Watson; clerk, Henry H. Worden; treasurer, Lewis D. Dean; school inspectors, Loyal Palmer and M. A. Patrick; directors of the poor, Ebenezer C. Smith and Martin Johnson; commissioners of highways, John Hartwell and Cornelius Wample; justices of the peace, Harlow T. Judson, John Bishop, Demas Hine, and Jared S. Spring; constables, Robert Howard, Major Worden, Isaac Tomlinson, and Mindrus Whitney.

John Bishop, who was one of the four justices of the peace chosen at this election, was a native of New Hampshire and came, in 1845, to Cannon township, being among the early settlers, and he followed farming during the remainder of an active and useful life. His son, Loomis K. Bishop, became in turn register of deeds and sheriff of Kent county and also served as postmaster at Grand Rapids.

Jared S. Spring, another of these pioneer magistrates, came from Farmersville, Cataraugus county, New York. In the spring of 1845



he started with his family, consisting of his wife and six sons, their household goods on a wagon, a team of horses and two cows. From Buffalo they took steamboat for Detroit, and there began the struggle over the log ways and through the deep sands of Michigan. The cows and a bag of meal furnished sustenance until they reached Cannonsburg. In Clinton county the horses were exchanged for two yoke of oxen. They purchased a farm, and the family struggled onward through fever and ague and dire necessities until fairer skies appeared and they felt that they were literally "out of the woods." The oldest of these six sturdy sons was Henry Spring, who for years was the king among drygoods merchants of Grand Rapids.

Robert Howard was born in Lincolnshire, England, Oct. 10, 1815. He emigrated to America when a young man of seventeen and landed in New York, his objective point. He came to Michigan soon after its admission as a State and resided in Detroit a number of years. He then came to Cannon township and bought a piece of unimproved land, which presented the aspect of a wilderness. He afterward sold this tract, but repurchased it, and he also secured land in Grattan township, where he afterward made his home.

Bear Creek, the exclusive property of Cannon, rises in the northeast corner of the township, on Section 1, in a large spring, which is claimed by some to have the peculiar power to petrify all substances that may chance to lie in its waters. The creek, fed by springs all its length, takes its devious way south and southwest, cutting the town nearly in halves, and debouching in Grand river on Section 30, the southwest corner of the township. This stream, being fed by springs, presents a never failing supply of water, and, running rapidly, furnishes a power that would be excellent for manufacturing purposes.

Cannonsburg, the only business center of any note in the township, was founded in 1842, with an Indian war trail as its main thoroughfare and the settler's axe as the only key that would open the forest gates that guarded its entrance. In 1844 and 1845 mills were erected there by E. B. Bostwick, with H. T. Judson as architect, and a store was opened. As an inducement to permanent settlement the village was platted, in 1845, and Mr. Bostwick, the enterprising business agent of LeGrand Cannon, its proprietor, was instructed to give a village lot to each resident not otherwise provided for. Thus twenty-five lots were given away. The town received the name it bears in honor of its founder, who testified his appreciation of the distinction conferred by presenting the village with a small cannon bearing his name and the date. This is treasured as a memento of early times and has been often used on the Fourth of July and other holiday occasions, wakening the echoes of memory as its thunders reverberated among the hills that completely surround the little village. Cannonsburg is situated upon both sides of Bear Creek. It has suffered by the growth of other towns with railroad accommodations, but it still is a trading point. It has Congregational and Methodist churches, a resident physician, a grocery, a grist-mill, and a general store.

Chauncey, formerly called Buena Vista, is situated on Section 30, near the mouth of Bear Creek. It consists of a few dwellings, a grist-mill and a general store. There is nothing more to be said of it, save that it is located amidst beautiful scenery.



There are several lakes within the township, but only two are worthy of particular mention. Silver Lake, on Sections 9 and 10, lying just north of and touching the line of the Grand Rapids & Ionia State Road, is a most beautiful sheet of water, containing about 300 acres. One mile directly east of Silver Lake is Bostwick Lake, which has been described as "a huge crystal, in emerald setting." No more beautiful scene can well be imagined. Its waters are very cold, evidently emanating from springs, as it has no visible inlet or natural outlet. This was a favorite resort in early days for fishing parties, and parties of pleasure coming from the village often camped on its banks and tarried over night. A huge canoe, fashioned by an Indian from a white wood tree grown a mile south of Cannonsburg, was transported with a vast amount of labor to its shores and launched upon its waters. The distance traveled was five miles, occupying two days in the transit, and four yoke of oxen were employed. There, in later years, the settlers on lands adjacent to the lake found the deserted canoe, a monster of its kind, over thirty feet in length. Wind and wave completed their work of destruction upon it and only a fragment of it finally remained as a relic to be gazed upon by those sentimentally inclined. This lake also lies north of the State road, which bends slightly in passing around its southern shore. It contains about 400 acres.

Prospect Hill, sometimes called Ball Hill, from the name of its long-time owner, John Ball of Grand Rapids, is a noteworthy eminence on Section 1. It rises abruptly from the surrounding country, and lifting its lofty tower above the surrounding trees, is visible for many miles away. A former owner planted it with apple trees to its very summit and in yielding seasons it has been a veritable bower of fruit.

The school facilities of Cannon township are first class and various church organizations are represented.

The following is a list of supervisors of Cannon township from its organization down to the present time: 1846, Andrew Watson; 1847, Hugh E. McKee; 1848, Norman Ackley; 1849, James Dockeray; 1851, Andrew Watson; 1852, Timothy E. Wetmore; 1853, James Dockeray; 1855, Daniel C. Pratt; 1856, Benjamin Davies; 1862, George W. Van Every; 1863, James Dockeray; 1866, Asa P. Ferry; 1871, James Dockeray; 1876, Loomis K. Bishop; 1877, Albert W. Davies; 1878, Andrew J. Provin; 1879, William C. Young; 1882, William S. Johnson; 1887, Oscar House; 1888, William S. Johnson; 1889, Frank Ladner; 1890, John G. Berry; 1891, Frank Ladner; 1894, W. J. Thomas; 1897, Charles N. Tuxbury; 1900, William Norman; 1902, Fred Thomas; 1903, Willis Young; 1909, Wilbert B. Moffitt; 1912, Bert Ramsdell; 1915, Wilbert Moffitt; 1916, William Norman, present incumbent.

Benjamin Davies was a native of Rhode Island, and settled at Napoleon, Jackson county, Michigan, in 1832. A number of years later he came to Kent county and located on a farm of 266 acres on Section 12 in Cannon township. He was a carpenter as well as a farmer by occupation. He died Oct. 1, 1861.

Albert W. Davies was born, Aug. 13, 1842, in Jackson county, Michigan, and was a son of Benjamin Davies, above mentioned. Mr.

Davies held the offices of treasurer, supervisor and highway commissioner of Cannon township. William C. Young was born, Sept. 1, 1821, at Little Britain, Orange county, New York. At the age of twenty-one he received about \$1,700 and prospected nearly two years in the southern and western parts of the United States, searching for a spot to locate that exactly pleased him. Much seeking and much territory of varied attractions only confused his preconceived ideas, and at last, in June, 1844, he invested his money in a large tract of Government land in Cannon township, and pitched his tent. He at one time was probably the wealthiest farmer in Kent county. He served his township in various official positions.

William S. Johnson was born in Norfolk, England, May 8, 1830. He was reared on Old England's soil until eighteen years old, at which time he and his brother, Matthew, ventured across the wide Atlantic. He lived in Orleans county, New York, until 1852, when he came to Solon township, Kent county, and entered eighty acres of land. He was one of the organizers of Solon and served as its treasurer six years. He cleared up a farm there, and in 1873 removed to Cannon township, where he served as township treasurer and also as supervisor.

Willis Young was born in Cannon township, April 3, 1858, and was the second son of William C. Young, mentioned herein. He passed his childhood days on the home farm, and his education was acquired primarily in the common schools until in 1875, 1877 and 1879, in which years he attended the State Normal School at Ypsilanti. Farming was always his chief occupation.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### GRATTAN TOWNSHIP

LOCATION AND PHYSICAL FEATURES—LAKES—FIRST SETTLEMENT—  
DENNIS MCCARTHY—MARRIAGE OF CONVERSE CLOSE—JARED  
WATKINS—FIRST OFFICERS—CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION—LIST OF  
SUPERVISORS.

Congressional township 8 north, range 9 west, is what is known as the township of Grattan. It is bounded on the north by Oakland township, on the east by the county of Ionia, on the south by the township of Vergennes, and on the west by the township of Cannon. The surface is undulating—we might say quite broken in consequence of the extraordinary network of lakes, but there are no ranges of hills nor prominent highlands, and the soil of the township is remarkably uniform, adapting it to the mixed husbandry of Michigan, and especially rendering it the best wheat growing portion of the county. The township has no water course of any note, except Seely's Creek, the outlet of nine of its principal lakes. It is an insignificant stream, averaging no more than two rods wide, yet, with its numerous and inexhaustible fountains, it supplied water power sufficient for pioneer grist mills and saw mills. It takes its rise in a small lake on Section 15, just north of the old State road and three-fourths of a



mile east of Grattan Center, running north one and one-quarter miles, through Pine Island Lake, west one and one-quarter miles, through Muskrat Lake, and thence southeast one and one-quarter miles through Wolf Lake, where it appears as a small stream and runs thence due east, passing within sixty rods of its source and debouching in Flat River at the village of Smyrna, in Ionia county. It was named after Munson Seely, a young hunter who, in early days, camped upon its banks and pursued the chase through the adjacent forests.

There are no less than twenty-four lakes in this township, covering an area of from thirty-six to 300 acres each, besides a host of smaller lakes or ponds, but six are large enough to merit special mention. Murray Lake lies on Sections 33 and 34 in Grattan and extends a considerable distance into Section 4, in Vergennes. It is the largest of the lakes of the township and is remarkable for its peculiar shape, being nearly divided in two by a long, narrow promontory of land, owned by the Thomas Lalley Estate. Crooked Lake, lying on Sections 20, 21 and 29, is one mile long, quite irregular in shape, and is noted for its islands. Round Lake, a pretty sheet of water on Section 21, is one-half mile long and about the same in width and contains about eighty acres. This lake and Crooked Lake discharge their waters through Seely Creek into Flat River. Slayton Lake is another small but beautiful sheet of water, lying on Section 23. It takes its name from one of the early settlers whose residence was near its shore. Muskrat Lake, on Sections 4, 5, 8 and 9, is one mile and a half long and about one-fourth of a mile wide, on the average. It contains about 230 acres and is bountifully stocked with fish. The kinds caught in it are black, rock and silver bass, pickerel and muskalonge. Pine Island Lake, lying on Sections 3 and 10, one mile and a quarter long and three-eighths of a mile wide, is the most beautiful of them all. Pine Island, from which the lake takes its name, lies on its bosom like a gem on a wave. The far-sweeping lake, with its picturesque shores and forest-crowned isle, fixes the gaze of the beholder like some enchanted scene of which we sometimes dream.

Originally there was a large amount of timber distributed over the surface of this township, principally oak and hickory, but Sections 25 and 36, and a portion of Sections 5 and 35 were rich timber lands.

In 1843, the first settlement was made within the limits of the township by Dennis and John McCarthy, on Section 30, and Richard Giles, on Section 32.

Dennis McCarthy was born, Nov. 29, 1818, in County Cork, Ireland. His father, Charles McCarthy, died when Dennis was but four years of age, and in 1837 the mother came to America with her children. In 1838 they reached Detroit and proceeded to Washtenaw county. In 1842 Dennis located land in Grattan and in 1843 the family settled there. The country was a dense wilderness, Indian trails were the only routes of travel and settlers were "squatted" miles apart. The nearest human habitation was about three miles distant. Mr. McCarthy sold his first wheat crop for forty cents a bushel at Grand Rapids and took one-half in store pay. His first purchase of land was 160 acres, which he increased to 540 acres, selling a consid-



erable portion later in life. He served at different times as township treasurer and highway commissioner and as justice of the peace eight years.

Richard Giles was born in County Waterford, Ireland, Dec. 2, 1799. He came to America in 1834 and lived one year in Madison county, New York, then moved to Grass Lake, Jackson county, Michigan, where he worked on the railroad for seven years, and then settled in Grattan, being among the first pioneers of the township, in 1843, preceded a few days only by Dennis and John McCarthy. Mr. Giles took up 320 acres of Government land at \$1.25 per acre. It was a wilderness, with no roads, and supplies had to be brought from Gull Prairie. Mr. Giles died in Grattan, July 16, 1877.

In 1844, Luther B. Cook built the first house north of Seely's Creek, on Section 12. The same year William Smith also settled on Section 12, Converse Close on Section 11, Jared Watkins on Section 13, Henry Green on Section 13, Anthony King and Alanson King on Section 1, Volney W. Caukin on Section 9, Michael Kennedy on Section 19, and William McCarthy on Section 30.

Converse Close was born in Saratoga county, New York, in 1822. His parents died when he was but a lad and he was "bound out" under the provisions usual in such cases—three months of school yearly until twenty-one and at that period \$100 and two suits of clothes. But the condition of schooling being unfulfilled, Mr. Close considered himself liberated, and at the end of seven years took his fate into his own hands. He went to Canada and hired for ten dollars a month, making the best possible disposal of his odd moments to obtain an education, and at twenty-one he was competent to teach. At that time he came into possession of \$800, and in 1843 bought 240 acres of land in Grattan township. He was married the following year to Mary B. Potter. The township was in its earliest days, the dense forest was still intact and dividing lines indefinite and little known. The young people were resolved to be married in Grattan and they decided the location by "blazed" trees. They stood on one side of the line in Kent county and "Squire" Cook, who performed the ceremony, stood on the other, in Ionia county, under the huge trees and the canopy of heaven. Mr. Close taught the first school in Grattan, the sessions being held in the upper part of his log house, which was also the scene of the first town meeting. He was the first mover in the organization of the Pioneer Society of Grattan. He was a farmer for thirty-five years and then, having accumulated a competence, he retired from active life and spent the remainder of his days in Grattan village.

Jared Watkins was born in Massachusetts, about 1792, and was a lad of fourteen years when taken by his parents to the State of New York, where he was reared to hard toil on a farm and received a limited education. He served as a soldier in the War of 1812, and after its close was engaged in farming in the State of New York until 1844, when he decided to come west and carve out a new home. He started with his family in a wagon from Yates county for Wayneport, Wayne county, New York, on the old Erie canal, thence went to Buffalo by canal boat, and thence by steamboat to Chicago, and by a sailing vessel to Grand Haven, and thence via



Grand River to Grand Rapids by steamboat, and from that then trading post came to Grattan township by ox-team, and took up 240 acres of Government land in Sections 13 and 14, the deeds being signed by President John Tyler. The land was all oak openings, and their first habitation here was a little log cabin, 14x20 feet, and there were but few other settlers in the township. The red men of the forest were quite numerous and oftentimes came to the cabin door of the Watkins family and partook of their hospitality. There was not a school-house nor a church in all of Grattan township, and when Mr. Watkins settled here he was compelled to go to Ionia with his wheat, as Lowell and Greenville were mere hamlets. Mr. Watkins did his full share of the noble pioneer work and passed away in 1872, honored by all who knew him.

Henry Green was born in Williamstown, Berkshire county, Massachusetts, in 1820. His father died when Henry was eight years old, and soon afterward his mother, with himself and four younger children, went to Bergen, Genesee county, New York, and in July, 1833, settled near Ann Arbor, Mich. In 1837 Mr. Green purchased a tract of wild land in Marion, Livingston county, and this he cleared and improved for the use of his mother and the family. He worked in a mill three years and then made his first trip to Kent county, but returned because the country was "too new." In 1844 he located the farm which he afterward occupied and upon it he expended the best energies of his life. He sold his first wheat crop in Grand Rapids at 44 cents a bushel, and when flour was \$3 a barrel nails were a shilling a pound. He built the first frame house and the second frame barn in the township.

William McCarthy was born, in 1813, in County Cork, Ireland. He came to America in 1837, with his mother and brothers, and in 1838 to Michigan. In the fall of 1843 they located in Grattan township, being among the first settlers, as already stated, and the following year William joined them. He "took up" 120 acres of land and afterward added sixty acres more. He improved 110 acres of wild forest land by his own unaided efforts.

Prominent among the settlers of 1845 we may mention John P. Weeks, located on Section 25; Orson Nicholson on Section 2, William Byrne on Section 27, and Anson Green on Section 14.

John P. Weeks was born in Dutchess county, New York, in 1807. His parents were of Quaker origin, and about the year 1812 they went to Vermont, where the father engaged in the manufacture of woolen goods, and there the son acquired his education and prepared for the pursuits of life. He started for Michigan in 1832 and had General Scott for a fellow passenger from Buffalo to Detroit. He went to Washtenaw county and, after some time spent in prospecting, purchased a farm near Chelsea. He sold it in 1844 and purchased 240 acres in Grattan.

William Byrne was born in County Carlow, or Kildare, Ireland. He married Ann Moran, later came to America and for some years lived in Canada. He came to Michigan in 1845 to work on the Michigan Central railroad. Later he arrived in Kent county and in course of time, through industry and frugality, he secured a large farm east of Round Lake, where he made some changes on the farm that had



first been improved by his son Michael. He was one of the thirty persons to organize St. Patrick's church and retained his membership in the congregation throughout life. He died Nov. 22, 1882, aged 72 years.

In 1846 Russell Slayton located on Section 14 and Dudley Newton on Section 17. Russell Slayton was born in Worcester, Mass., and in early life removed to Rochester, N. Y. He came thence to Grattan township, the journey consuming forty-six days. He was among the earliest residents and landholders of the township. Among the settlers of 1847 we find Martin Mason, located on Section 23.

The township of Grattan was organized at a meeting held the first Monday in April, 1846, at the house of Converse Close, and the following gentlemen were honored by being elected to office: Supervisor, Milton C. Watkins; clerk, Volney W. Caukin; treasurer, Erastus W. Beasom; highway commissioners, Thomas J. Morgan, Joshua Fish, and William C. Stanton; justices of the peace, Samuel H. Steele, John P. Weeks, William Byrne, and Luther B. Cook; school inspectors, Samuel H. Steele and William Beauermann; constables, Jedidiah H. Wood and Thomas J. Morgan; overseers of poor, Luther B. Cook and Samuel H. Steele; assessors, Anthony King and Barlow Barto.

Samuel H. Steele was a native of Ontario County, New York. He moved to Kent County in 1844, about the date of the survey of the State Road, and "took up" 400 acres of land. He was a prominent and active citizen, filled most of the different township offices, and was foremost in all religious movements.

As early as 1848 the Catholics erected a small church in their cemetery on Section 32, and the same was dedicated to St. Patrick. In ten years the congregation had become much too large for the seating capacity of the house, and it was moved upon Section 31, converted into a school house, and a new and commodious edifice was erected on an eminence one-fourth of a mile west of the old site. This building, while undergoing repairs, was accidentally burned in 1868, but a new one was erected immediately thereafter. The church organization there is a very active one.

In 1850 Edward Bellamy and Nathan Holmes, brothers-in-law, formed a partnership and erected a grist mill upon Seely's Creek, near its source in Wolf Lake, on Section 16. This was the nucleus of Grattan Center, the only business center in the township. It has perhaps a dozen dwellings, two general stores and a flour mill.

The following is a list of the supervisors of Grattan township from its organization to the present time: 1846, Milton C. Watkins; 1847, John P. Weeks; 1849, Milton C. Watkins; 1851, Frederick C. Patterson; 1852, Milton C. Watkins; 1854, Converse Close; 1855, Luther K. Madison; 1856, Converse Close; 1857, Milton C. Watkins; 1858, Converse Close and Dudley Newton; 1859, George D. Wood; 1861, Theodore N. Chapin; 1862, B. W. B. Madison; 1863, Salsbury Mason; 1865, George D. Wood; 1866, Volney W. Caukin; 1867, George D. Wood; 1868, Oliver I. Watkins; 1871, Jerome A. Duga; 1872, Oliver I. Watkins; 1873, John W. Nicholson; 1876, Oliver I. Watkins; 1877, Alvin C. Davis; 1879, Aaron Norton; 1885, Oliver I. Watkins; 1887, Johnson M. Giffin; 1891, Oliver I. Watkins;



1893, Frank McArthur; 1895, John G. Hessler; 1897, Manley Whitten; 1900, James McGinnis; 1902, Frank McArthur; 1906, C. Kent Jakeway; 1911, Elmer G. Storey; 1913, Edwin L. Brooks; 1916, C. Kent Jakeway, present incumbent.

Luther K. Madison was born April 16, 1824, in the old-fashioned New Hampshire village of Hill, Merrimac County, lying a few miles north of Concord, on the Pemigewasset River, which flows from the never failing springs of the White Mountains. When he was yet an infant in arms he was brought across the Green Mountains by his parents, who established themselves at the then growing young city of Rochester, N. Y. The tide of emigration being then to Michigan, the father, in 1830, joined the flood and for a time was in business in Detroit, soon, however, settling in Utica, Macomb County, where for many years he conducted a popular hostelry. In 1846 Luther K. accompanied his brother, Brooks W. B. Madison, to Grattan, securing government land. His first habitation was the usual small log house, with mud and stick chimney, home-made in its every appointment, even to its doors and the shelves on pegs for the accommodation of the household ware. Mr. Madison followed farming during all of his active career and died in Grattan township, Nov. 11, 1896.

George D. Wood was born in Delaware County, Ohio, in 1830. In 1837 the family located in Calhoun County, Michigan, and in 1847 settled in Grattan township, where the father had located land, in 1843, on Sections 15 and 22. George D. Wood entered Olivet College at the age of sixteen with the design of fitting for a professional career, but his father becoming incapacitated for business, the son was obliged to relinquish his plans and took charge of the family homestead, where his active life was spent. He was also active in the affairs of the township and served as supervisor and also as clerk. He enlisted in his country's service in Company F, Second Michigan Cavalry, and was with the regiment three years, the last year serving as ordnance sergeant.

Salsbury Mason was a native of New York, born in 1820, and died in 1881. From his boyhood his energies were devoted to agricultural pursuits. He first located in Grattan township, purchasing from the state 120 acres of land, and became prosperous and influential. He removed to Wyoming township in 1866, there residing the remainder of his days. He served as supervisor and treasurer of Grattan and was ever a friend of the public schools.

Oliver I. Watkins was born in Italy, Yates County, New York, Jan. 11, 1831, and was a son of Jared Watkins, who has been mentioned in these pages as one of the very early pioneers of Grattan township. He was educated in the old-style school house, but improved his leisure hours by reading standard literary works, history, and such other volumes as had a tendency to develop and ripen his intellect. He held at different times all the minor offices of his township and held the record of the longest service as supervisor, filling that office nine years. He was justice of the peace twenty-seven years, and in 1862 and 1863 served as township treasurer.



**CHAPTER XX.**

## SPARTA TOWNSHIP

DATE OF ORGANIZATION—ROUGE RIVER—FIRST PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT—EARLY SETTLERS—JONATHAN E. NASH—FIRST ELECTION—VILLAGE OF SPARTA — LISBON — ENGLISHVILLE—CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS—SCHOOLS—SOIL—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

The organization of Sparta dates from 1846. It is not only one of the most fertile and wealthy townships of the county, but is also one of the most picturesquely beautiful, historically interesting in the details of its civil existence, and prosperous in its material development.

Rouge River passes southerly through the eastern portion of the township, and is its most striking topographical feature. The river enters the township near the northeast corner and leaves it at the southeast quarter of Section 25. The river is fed by many small streams which enter it and help swell the volume of water. The smaller streams are made up from the many clear and sparkling springs that gush forth in various parts of the adjacent country. The splendid water power that the River Rouge affords was utilized in a very early day.

The first permanent improvement which was made in the township of Sparta is credited to Lewis W. Purdy, who located there in 1844. He came from Genesee County, moved his family into the township and was one of the first tillers of the soil. In the same year, and a little before the advent of Mr. Purdy, Lyman Smith settled on Section 25, near the southeast part of the township, and following him came Norman and Edwin Cummings, who located on Section 34. But they built no houses worthy of the name, living in small shanties, and it remained for Mr. Purdy, who settled on the southwest corner of Section 28, to erect the first log house in the now thickly settled township of Sparta. Mrs. Purdy was the first white woman in the township. In January, 1845, Joseph English and family came direct from England and went just over the line in Section 36, in the southeast part of the township. Mr. English, although unable to read or write when he came to Sparta, was a man of great perseverance and succeeded, in the course of a few years, in erecting a large steam saw-mill, which drew quite a number of men, who bought lots and erected small houses, thereby making a little village which was called Englishville. This mill being destroyed by fire, Mr. English moved to Laphamville, now known as Rockford, where he continued his activities. By buying some of the mills and renting others, he succeeded in getting control of nearly all of the mills on Rouge River, from which he shipped a large quantity of lumber to Chicago, but owing to a decline in prices he failed to make it pay and was obliged to suspend business, yet not until he had—by his great energy and venturesome spirit—infused new life into the whole lumber district of Rouge River. He afterward, with his sons, erected a water mill on the north part of his farm. A little hamlet, still known as Englishville, is about all that remains to remind one of the once flourishing little village; the construction of the Pere Marquette Railroad not being able to revive it. In the spring of 1845, Mr. Cummings—the father of Norman, Edwin and Nelson Cummings—came



with his family to the place where the sons had previously begun. Lyman Smith and Mr. Purdy did not long remain residents of Sparta, but they left their impress as pioneers upon the locality.

In June, 1845, John Symes, Elihu Rice, and Anthony Chapman met in Alpine, while on their way to settle in Sparta. They were strangers to one another, but soon found, by comparing descriptions, that the lands which they had respectively bought or pre-empted, all lay adjoining and, going on the principle that "in union is strength," they, after consultation, decided on the course they would take, and the next morning Rice and Symes started from the house of Joseph English to underbrush a road from there west along the present town line of Alpine and Sparta. Meanwhile Chapman had returned to Mill Creek for provisions. After cutting west to the section corner, afterward known as Rouse's Corners, they turned north and followed the line between Sections 34 and 35. Toward night they were beginning to think of returning to the house of Mr. English, but at that moment they heard a wagon approaching, and on waiting for it to come up found it was Chapman, who had come with supplies. They now built a fire by the side of a log and camped for the night, with the wolves howling around them while they slept. In the morning they completed the road to what was to be their homes. Mr. Rice's land was on Section 27 and Mr. Symes' and Mr. Chapman's on 26. Three trees were found on the line of Symes' and Chapman's land which would do for three corner posts of a shanty, and by putting in one post and the use of a few boards which had been brought along from Mill Creek, a shelter was soon formed to which the families were taken the next day, and there they lived together until houses were erected.

John Symes was a native of England, born in 1817. He came to Massachusetts in 1836 and resided three years on what is known as Indian Hill farm. He traveled a year afterward and went to work in Ohio, and three years afterward went to Canada, where he worked the same length of time on a canal, serving one year as foreman of the stone delivery. When he came to Sparta he purchased 120 acres of land. He held the position of township clerk two years and also served as highway commissioner. His wife, whose maiden name was Harriet Abbott, a native of Steuben County, New York, taught the first school in Sparta township.

About this time David B. Martindale settled on Section 36. During the following fall and winter Hiram H. Meyers settled east of Rouge River, on Section 24, and was soon followed by his father and family from Canada. This family took a large tract of land in the east part of Sparta, where they engaged quite extensively in lumbering, especially Hiram and John and Myron Balcom, near the center of the township, and William Blackall and family southwest of the center. Clark Brown, who came from the State of New York, early in 1845, settled on the south line of Section 33. In 1846, J. E. Nash, from Massachusetts, settled one mile east of the center of the township.

Jonathan E. Nash was born at Greenfield, Mass., May 28, 1820, and was brought up on a farm. His father died when Jonathan was but five years old and the family affairs were managed by the moth-



er, with whom the son remained until 26 years of age. In 1846 he came to the portion of Kent County now known as Sparta, then a wilderness, comparatively unknown to white men, and located 200 acres on Sections 23 and 14. He cut the first tree where the village of Sparta now stands and his first abode was a log house, where he kept bachelor's hall for a number of years and improved his land. In 1848 he built a saw-mill on Nash's Creek, on Section 14, the first saw-mill in the township. He sold the mill in 1865 and after that devoted himself to clearing and managing his farm, which included 160 acres adjoining the village of Sparta. He served as supervisor of Sparta township eleven years, highway commissioner several terms, and held most of the minor township offices.

Among other settlers who were pioneers in various parts of the township were the Spangenburgs, Amidons, Bradfords, Hinmans, McNitts, Taylors, Stebbinses, R. D. Hastings and Ira Blanchard. Lyman Murray settled in Sparta in an early day, but soon removed to Alpine, and in 1879 returned and spent the remainder of his days in Sparta village.

Sparta township was organized April 6, 1846, nine years after Michigan was admitted to the Union as a State. The township then included the present townships of Sparta and Tyrone. Those that stood around the ballot box at this first election were Caleb Amidon, Benjamin Blackall, Clark Brown, John M. Balcom, William Blackall, Myron H. Balcom, Wyman M. Bartlett, Newell Barker, Myron H. Bird, Jacob A. Bradford, Anthony Chapman, Joel French, James Huff, Charles B. Hatch, Jacob Hiles, Minor Letts, David B. Martindale, Benjamin Myers, Parsly Otis, Berry D. Pearl, Lewis W. Purdy, Elihu Rice, William Rodgers, John A. Simmons, Jacob Spangenburg, James V. Simmons, George Spangenburg, Philip Slaght, Lyman Smith, Luther Van Horn, Harvey Van Horn, and Edward H. Wylie—thirty-two in all—and there were twenty offices to fill, so nearly every voter was destined to fill some office and possibly some were elected to two or three. The records of the township were destroyed by fire in 1876 and the full list of officers elected was thereby lost, but it is certain that Lewis W. Purdy was chosen supervisor; John M. Balcom, clerk; Myron H. Balcom, township treasurer, and William Rodgers, Charles B. Hatch, Edward H. Wylie and Elihu Rice, justices of the peace. This little band of pioneers who then laid the foundation of the township have all long since passed away. At the ensuing state election thirty-nine votes were cast in Sparta township.

The village of Sparta, which had a precarious existence for the first years of its life, gradually assumed the importance of a thrifty center of population. Prior to the construction of the present Pere Marquette railroad to that point it was scarcely a business center and had but a small population, though there were successful business enterprises located in the village. But with the building of the railroad, and the establishment of a station there, the village began to take on more active life and in 1883 it was incorporated. It is supported by a rich agricultural district, remote from considerable towns, and is an extensive shipping point, being probably the largest shipping point for fat live stock on the line of the Pere Mar-



quette Railroad, north of Grand Rapids. The business men of the place are progressive and enterprising people, who command ample capital and first-class facilities for the transaction of the large volume of business. Though it has not made rapid strides in growth, its population is mainly of that solid, permanent character which adds financial strength and stability. According to the United States census of 1910 the population is 1,203. The village has well built residences and business blocks, and good educational advantages and church facilities.

The village of Lisbon, on the west line of the township, is sixteen miles from Grand Rapids, on the old Grand Rapids & Newaygo State Road. It was first settled by John Pintler, who came here from the State of New York in 1846. In 1848 a mail route was established from Grand Rapids to Newaygo, with a postoffice at this point under the name of Pintler's Corners, Mr. Pintler being the first postmaster. In 1859 the name of the office was changed to Lisbon. The first goods sold from a store in this place were by Miner Atherton, in 1855. In March, 1869, it was regularly incorporated as a village, including half a mile each way from the northwest corner post of Section 30. It will be noticed that this includes half a section—or, more properly, two quarter sections—from Ottawa County. It became a place of considerable importance, but as it was not so fortunate as to get on the line of a railroad it began to decay and now has but one general store and a wagon repair shop.

The Baptist and the Methodist Episcopal denominations were the pioneer religious organizations in the township of Sparta. As early as the late forties, itinerant ministers of these sects held religious services in the settlers' cabins and invaded the school houses for the same purposes as soon as they were established. Church organizations were formed at the village of Sparta. The congregations at first worshiped in the dwellings of members and in the small frame school house which had been erected in 1849, and each of the denominations had erected a church edifice by 1866. Other religious societies have since been organized in the village and contribute to the spiritual welfare of the people.

Sparta township is well supplied with district schools now, in striking contrast with the log houses and antiquated means of construction of former days. It is said that among the early teachers in the township there were a number of sturdy "wielders of the birch."

Reference has been made to the first school house, from which arose two of the prosperous religious organizations of the village of Sparta. But that was not its only mission, nor in fact the principal one. While serving in the capacity of town hall, a voting place, a general receptacle for itinerant shows, and all classes of public meetings, it was also the birthplace of educational ambitions, which culminated in some of the colleges of the day. The old school house has been superseded by fine structures, with a systematic arrangement for the instruction of pupils in all grades of advancement, each of the various departments being in charge of a teacher especially adapted to the class of instruction required, and the whole under the direct supervision of an educator of known ability and success. The schools of Sparta are second to none of like grade in the county or



country, and they reflect, in a marked degree, the intelligent and public-spirited enterprise of those who sustain them.

The soil of the township of Sparta is generally fertile and well adapted to the raising of all kinds of grains, grasses and fruits. The valleys of the River Rouge and its various branches are especially rich and productive; while the upland is not so desirable for farming purposes, yet the soil there is of better quality than much of the land of similar character in other localities. The township was originally covered with a fine growth of timber, in which the hardwood varieties predominated. There is much valuable timber still in the township.

The following is a list of the supervisors of Sparta township from its organization in 1846 down to the present time: 1846, Lewis W. Purdy; 1848, Jonathan E. Nash; 1849, Lewis W. Purdy; 1850, Horace McNitt; 1851, Jonathan E. Nash; 1853, Caleb Amidon; 1854, Jonathan E. Nash; 1857, Sidney McNitt; 1858, Jonathan E. Nash; 1859, Ira Blanchard; 1861, Jacob Spangenburg; 1863, Ira Blanchard; 1864, Christopher C. Hinman; 1865, Rufus Payne; 1866, Sidney McNitt; 1868, Volney W. Caukin; 1872, Christopher C. Hinman; 1875, Jonathan E. Nash; 1877, John Manchester; 1878, Jonathan E. Nash; 1879, Christopher C. Hinman; 1881, Rezin A. Maynard; 1883, James B. Taylor; 1884, Christopher C. Hinman; 1885, Avonley E. Roberts; 1889, Leslie E. Paige; 1890, Avonley E. Roberts; 1892, Leslie E. Paige; 1893, Avonley E. Roberts; 1894, Norton Fitch; 1896, Henry Myers; 1901, Vernon H. Billings; 1908, Charles J. Rice; 1917, G. E. Jacobs, present incumbent.

Christopher C. Hinman was born May 13, 1830, in the State of New York, Madison County. In 1852 he settled in Sparta township, on Section 32, buying eighty acres of land with what means he had and involved himself in debt to the extent of \$300. But he was successful from the start and became one of the leading citizens of the township, filling the office of supervisor seven years.

Rezin A. Maynard was born in Seneca County, New York, Sept. 21, 1853. He took a literary course of study at Hillsdale, Mich., and in 1879 entered the law department at Ann Arbor. He was admitted to the bar in 1880 and located at Sparta, where he held the office of justice of the peace and in the spring of 1881 was elected supervisor, being re-elected in 1882 and serving two terms. In 1890 he was appointed surveyor of customs at the port of Grand Rapids and held the position until 1893. He then gave up the law, entered the Christian ministry and accepted a charge in Denver, Colo.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ALPINE TOWNSHIP

DATE OF ORGANIZATION—PHYSICAL FEATURES—VILLAGE OF ALPINE—  
EARLY SETTLERS—FIRST OFFICERS—WATER COURSES—SOIL—LIST  
OF SUPERVISORS.

Previous to April 5, 1847, the territory of this township was a part of the township of Walker. It was then organized as a separate township, in conformity with the prayer of certain petitioners, and given the name of Alpine. It retains its original form and size, con-



taining thirty-six square miles, a full Congressional township. A portion of the township is embraced in the valley of Grand River and is very rich and valuable territory. The northern portion of the township is traversed by two small streams, the valleys of which are also fertile lands and embrace a considerable area. Numerous spring runs increase the volume of water in the creeks mentioned, and at the same time enhance the value of the lands traversed, rendering them available for grazing purposes.

The general surface of the township of Alpine is level, and the soil is very productive, producing excellent crops of wheat, oats, and other cereals. Fine farms and excellent improvements attest the fertility of the land. The surface of the township was originally covered with a heavy growth of excellent timber, and the varieties were those usually found in this section of the State. While some valuable timber is still preserved, by far the greater part of it was destroyed in fitting the land for cultivation. That which survived the pioneer log-heaps has submitted to oft-repeated cullings for market purposes, or the personal needs of the owners, until at this time the territory where it grew thickest more resembles the treeless prairies of the West than the original home of a dense forest.

The village of Alpine, located in the eastern part of the township, is one of the most prosperous trading centers of its size in the county. It is a small hamlet of about 125 inhabitants, but considerable trade is carried on there in merchandise, live stock and farm products. It has two churches—Catholic and Union—two general stores, one of which also deals in coal, shingles and cement; a cider and feed mill, and a resident physician is located there. The little hamlet is situated on the Newaygo branch of the Pere Marquette railroad.

The territory now embraced within Alpine township was visited by prospective settlers at about as early a period as any of the northern townships of the county, with a very few exceptions. The first man to make an actual settlement in the township was Solomon Wright, who, with his family, came from Wayne County, New York, in the year 1837, and located on the south line, near Indian Creek. The family consisted of the old gentleman and wife and five sons—Benjamin, Solomon, Noadiah, Andrew, and Jeremiah. One of these sons lost his life in the Civil War.

In the year 1840 John Coffee and Richmond Gooding came from Ohio, penetrated the forest nearly five miles beyond the Wright neighborhood and settled on Section 20, near the west line of the township. John Coffee was a native of Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, Ireland, and was born May 12, 1812. He came from Ireland to America with his parents in the year 1815, and they first located in Pennsylvania, where they remained for some time prior to their removal to Marion County, Ohio. After living in Ohio for some time, and after considerable moving, Mr. Coffee finally came to Michigan, where he purchased his farm in Section 20, and immediately commenced cutting the timber, disposing of the same and buying more land and timber until he became independently rich, at the time of his death being considered one of Alpine's richest farmers. His death occurred April 6, 1887.



For years Messrs. Coffee and Gooding called their location the "jumping off place," as there were no settlements north of them, and in fact no house in any direction nearer than three or four miles. About the same time Jacob Snyder—a German—settled on Section 35, and another German by the name of John Platte on Section 36, in the southeast corner of the township.

John Platte was a native of Helden, Germany, and was born in the year 1822. He emigrated from Germany to America with his parents when but a boy, in the year 1838. Upon their arrival in Kent County, they at once purchased from the government a tract of land in Sections 35 and 36, Alpine township, where Mr. Platte made his home until his death, which occurred Aug. 18, 1870.

A short time before the arrival of these excellent German citizens, Turner Hills and family came from Vermont and located in the east part of the township, on Section 13, where for several years they were the northernmost settlers. Among other pioneers who settled in various parts of the township were Noel Hopkins, Baltas Schaffer, Peter Schlick, James Snowden, Sherman M. Pearsall, John B. Colton, A. B. Toms, Thompson Kasson, Joseph Hipler, John Ellis, Edward Wheeler, Hervey Wilder, Joseph Bullen, Moses Ramsdell, John J. Downer, Hiram Stevenson, Artemus Hilton, Henry S. Church, Charles Anderson, Francis Greenley, and the Boyds, Denisons, Meads, Brewers, Davenports, and Cordes, all of whom came before 1850.

Sherman M. Pearsall was born in Cayuga County, New York, Dec. 11, 1817. He was a teacher at Troy, N. Y., and came to Kent County in 1844, locating on the line between Alpine and Walker townships, where he resided one year, and then, in 1845, removed to Section 28, Alpine township, where he remained until the spring of 1876. He then removed to Grand Rapids, where he resided the remainder of his life. He was the original temperance man in Alpine, refusing to have liquor at his barn raising.

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, Alpine was united with the township of Walker until the year 1847. Its first independent township meeting was held at the school house in the southeast corner of the township, April 5, 1847, and it resulted in the election of the following named persons as officers: Supervisor, Edward Wheeler; clerk, C. D. Shenich; treasurer, Casper Cordes; justices, William H. Withey, John Coffee, John Colton, and John Tuxbury. The next annual meeting was held at the house of Edward Wheeler, near the center of the township. Soon after this a small log school house was erected on the corner of Mr. Wheeler's farm, one-half mile east of the center, and was used as a place of holding township meetings, until about the year 1860, when a nice frame town hall building was erected on the northeast corner of Section 21, the location of the present town hall.

William H. Withey came from Vermont and built a saw-mill on the northeast corner of Section 25, in 1838, and for twenty-eight years was prominent in business enterprises, including a line of stages to Battle Creek and Kalamazoo and the work of constructing the Kalamazoo & Grand Rapids plank road.

Alpine—which is said to have derived its name from the supposition of many of the early settlers, who were near the streams and



in the eastern part of the township, that it was chiefly timbered with pine—is very different from what its name would indicate to a stranger. There was, originally, considerable pine along the larger streams and in the northeasterly corner of the township. At one time seven saw-mills were situated on Mill Creek and were doing quite a business. The source of Mill Creek is Cranberry Lake, which is situated on the line between Kent and Ottawa Counties, extending into Section 6 of Alpine. From there to Pickerel Lake, on Section 10, Mill Creek is but a small rivulet. We mention this as the main stream, but there is another branch about the same size which comes in from Sparta and unites with the former near the north line of Section 9. From Pickerel Lake to its mouth Mill Creek is fed by several small streams, one of which comes from Downer Lake on the southeast quarter of Section 10. The main stream passes about one and one-half miles north of the center of the township, thence southeasterly until it unites with Grand River in the southwest corner of Plainfield. For a distance of five or six miles from its mouth the water power is sufficiently good for manufacturing purposes. Along this stream originally there was a series of small swamps, extending nearly the whole width of the township from east to west and bordered on either side by clay bluffs, rising in some places to a height of 60 or 70 feet. North of this, and extending into Sparta, is a ridge of high, rolling, and originally timbered land, which is as good as can be found in the county for farming purposes, fruit growing, etc. On the south is a similar ridge which divides Mill Creek on one side from Indian and Sand Creeks on the other. One branch of Indian Creek rises near the center of the township and the other in the western part. These branches unite in the north part of Section 28, and thence the stream flows south into Walker, crossing the south line of Alpine near the center. One branch of Sand Creek rises in the western part of Alpine and flows south into Walker and thence west into Ottawa County. Another branch of the same stream has its source in a small lake covering about ten acres, situated on the line between Sections 28 and 29. Mead Lake is situated on the east line of Section 12 and extends east into Plainfield. The lake and surrounding swamp cover about forty acres. In the early days a saw-mill was erected on the north side of this lake and an effort was made to build up a town, which was christened New Boston, but, like many other such enterprises, it never went much beyond the paper plat.

The soil of the beech and maple-timbered portions of Alpine—which comprise about two-thirds of the township—is generally clay or loam. Indeed Alpine is a township of good land, well adapted to the production of both grain and fruit. The good looking orchards and the loads of nice apples, peaches, plums, pears, etc., as well as the excellent yields of wheat and other grain, speak for themselves. The soil of the pine-timbered portions is sandy, but it grows fair crops when properly cultivated and improved. With great natural advantages the township has attracted to its confines an excellent class of citizens, and from the small beginning, the particulars of which we have attempted to relate in this chapter, the township has grown in population until in 1910 the United States census gave the number of inhabitants of the township as 1,436.



The following is a list of the supervisors of Alpine township from its organization down to the present time: 1847, Edward Wheeler; 1848, William H. Withey; 1851, Alonzo Brewer; 1852, Charles T. Hills; 1853, John B. Colton; 1856, Reuben H. Smith; 1857, Lyman Murray; 1858, Reuben H. Smith; 1859, Lyman Murray; 1866, Isaac Haynes; 1873, Henry D. Wedge; 1874, Lyman Murray; 1875, Henry D. Wedge; 1876, Lyman Murray; 1877, Norton Fitch; 1883, James Hill; 1893, Aaron H. Hills; 1896, John F. Klenk; 1900, Nicholas B. Creveling; 1903, J. A. Burch; 1904, Charles H. Chase; 1910, George Albert; 1913, Louis F. Cordes; 1916, Charles H. Chase, present incumbent.

Norton Fitch was born in Orleans County, New York, Nov. 17, 1833, and came to this county in 1848, when fifteen years of age. He became one of the most enterprising and substantial citizens and farmers of Alpine township and served in most of its local offices. He held school offices for ten years consecutively, was treasurer five years and officiated as supervisor six years. On the breaking out of the Civil War he felt impelled to respond to the call of the nation and enlisted Aug. 17, 1861, at Grand Rapids, in Company C, First United States sharpshooters, for three years, or during the war. He was sworn into the service in Detroit and soon afterward was appointed corporal. He was engaged in the Siege of Yorktown and the battles of Williamsburg, Hanover Court House, Mechanicsville, Gaines' Mill, Charles City Cross Roads, Malvern Hill, and the second battle of Bull Run. In the last named engagement his left arm was shot off by a shell, and he received his honorable discharge Oct. 18, 1862.

John F. Klenk was born in Maryland in 1837, and came to this county in 1860. In 1861 he enlisted in Company C, Third Michigan infantry, and was in the service two years and four months. He was in the battle of Bull Run, in the seven days' fight at Richmond and in all the Peninsula campaign. In civil life he was equally faithful and served four years as supervisor of Alpine township.

George Albert was a native of Otisco, Ionia County, born Sept. 15, 1852. He began life for himself when forty years of age, previous to that time having conducted the business of his father. He purchased 120 acres of land in Section 15, Alpine township, and soon became recognized as a sterling citizen. He served the people of that township as justice of the peace and also as supervisor.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### CASCADE TOWNSHIP

LOCATION AND WATER COURSES—FIRST SETTLERS—WHITNEYVILLE—  
DISEASE AMONG INDIANS—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING—FIRST  
OFFICERS—REV. ERIE PRINCE—FIRST POSTOFFICE—LIST OF SU-  
PERVISORS.

That part of Kent County which is known as the township of Cascade comprises Congressional township 6, range 10 west, and contains, of course, thirty-six sections of land. It is bounded on the north by Ada township, on the east by Lowell township, on the south by Caledonia township, and on the west by the township of Paris.



This township is watered by Thornapple River and its branches, the main stream flowing in a northerly direction. The surface of the township is greatly diversified by hills, valleys, streams, lakes, springs and marshes. Grand River flows northwest through Sections 12, 1 and 2, into Ada. On the east of the Thornapple a creek rises in Section 11 and enters that stream on Section 10. Another, one branch of which rises in Section 30, Lowell, and the other in Section 1, of Caledonia, forms a junction on Section 26, in Cascade, and carries its united currents to the Thornapple on Section 27. On the west side of the river a creek, rising on Section 29, forms a junction with it on Section 34. Another having its head on Section 19 enters the river on Section 16. Another, whose source is a large boiling spring on Section 6, in its course of two and a half miles attains considerable size and empties its waters into the Thornapple at Section 9. Remains of an old beaver dam were to be seen on this creek in the early days of settlement. The soil is a sandy loam, occasionally gravelly, and the township originally consisted of oak openings, with a soil admirably suited for grain and grass. On the southeast quarter of Section 14 is probably one of the most remarkable lakes of Kent County or Michigan. It is said to have a greater depth of water than Lake Erie. The aborigines of the country had a singular superstition in regard to this lake, never floating their canoes on its bosom or eating the fish of its waters. They asserted that it was inhabited by an "evil spirit" or, as they termed it, a "Great Snake." But the cause of any phenomenon in connection with this lake is a question for the scientist, rather than the historian. Another lake is found on the line of Sections 4 and 5, and also one in the northwest corner of Section 8, matched by some forty rods directly north.

Lewis Cook, a native of New Jersey, is said to have been the first settler within the limits of Cascade. He removed from that State to Seneca County, New York, and from thence to Washtenaw County, in this State, from which he came as a pioneer settler to Cascade in 1836. At or near this time also came Hiram Laraway, from New York, his wife being a sister of Mrs. Cook. But, discouraged by the hardships of the wilderness, and dismayed by the prospects occasioned by the panic of 1837, he returned to Eastern Michigan. In 1839 or 1840 he started back to Cascade, but lost his way in the woods of Ada township and was frozen to death. His widow bravely met the heavy burdens of pioneer life and trained up three sons and a daughter to lives of usefulness, while the name of Aunt Mary Laraway became a household word in the community and a synonym of virtue and piety. She lived to see her children settled in life. She was fatally injured by a fall from a cherry tree on the homestead, her death occurring in 1869.

In 1837, Edward Lennon, a native of Ireland—whose shores he left for America in 1836—settled in Cascade, where he became a useful, industrious citizen. He was born in County Wicklow, Ireland, in 1819. When he came to America he landed at Quebec and made his way soon thereafter to Cascade township, where he took up eighty acres of government land. There were no roads when he came in and he cut the highway from the Cascade & Grand Rapids road to his place. The Catholic Church of the township was organized in his house.



In the year 1838, and the subsequent year, Mr. Lennon was followed by James May, David Petted, John Farrell, James and William Annis, Michael Matthews, Patrick, Christopher and Michael Eardley, all natives of the same country. In 1838, Frederick A. Marsh, of New York, united in marriage with Olive Guild, a daughter of Joel Guild, one of the pioneer settlers of Grand Rapids, and began domestic life in the unbroken wilderness, one mile north and west of where the little hamlet of Cascade is located. Mr. Marsh lived to see the forest yield to cultivated fields and comfortable dwellings, and to have a school house erected on his own land. He was killed by a fall from his wagon in 1856. Mrs. Marsh, afterward Mrs. Walden, survived her husband eleven years, and often spoke of those days when her nearest neighbors were miles away and for three months at a time she did not see the face of a white man, except her husband, and a human being passing over the newly cut road was a relief to her intense loneliness. She died at the old homestead in 1867.

Peter and George Teeple came to Cascade in these early years, joining the settlers on the west side of the Thornapple, while the eastern side was as yet unmarked by civilization, but inhabited on and near Sections 23 and 26 by a colony of about 350 natives, known, through the adoption of the name of their missionary, as the Slater Indians. The Teeples were born in Essex, N. J., sons of Jonas Teeple, who, with his entire family of grown sons and daughters, came to Michigan and settled where the village of Plymouth, Wayne County, now stands. Jonas made several visits to Kent County, but died in Wayne County when past eighty years old. His three sons—Peter, George and James—all settled in Kent County, Peter and George coming in 1836 and James some years later, settling at Sparta. Peter Teeple was the father of seven children when he came to Kent County. He had sold a large farm at Plymouth, and in Cascade township bought 700 acres of government land at \$1.25 per acre—all practically in one tract. He built a little log house on Section 18 and there passed the remainder of his life, the little log house, however, giving place to a fine dwelling in 1855. Mr. Teeple was for many years agent for speculators who owned large tracts of land in the county, and of these he sold many acres to settlers, doing much to people this region. Although he was but eight miles from Grand Rapids, then nick-named "Bob-o-link," it took him two days to make the trip. For five years he was supervisor of his township, and he kept up his interest in public affairs until he had attained an advanced age. He died in 1875 at the age of eighty-two years. George W. Teeple came to Cascade with his wife and two children. This was soon after Lewis Cook, who was a maternal uncle of the Teeples, had arrived, and soon afterward came Edward Cook, a veteran of the War of 1812, who likewise took up his residence in Cascade. In 1848 George W. Teeple removed his family to Section 18, on the line of Paris township, settling on a tract of 150 acres, and there he died, in 1884, at the age of seventy-four years.

In the year 1841, Peter Whitney, of Ohio, moved his family into that part of Cascade which was long known as Whitneyville, and E. D. Gove, of Massachusetts, selected a site for his future home near the center of the township on Sections 22, 15 and 14, to which he



brought his family in the summer of 1842. Horace Sears, from New York, and Zerah and Ezra Whitney (father and brother to Peter) accompanied them in their journey and settled in Whitneyville. In the spring of 1845, Asa W. Denison and family, of Massachusetts, accompanied by a brother, Gideon H. Denison, looking for a homestead (to which he brought his family the following year), came to join the settlers on the west side of the Thornapple. Coming in on the State road, from Battle Creek to Grand Rapids, the teams, women and children of the company were obliged to wait at Ezra Whitney's public house for the road to be "chopped out" between that point and the river, theirs being the first teams that passed over the road. At Cascade they forded the Thornapple with their household goods and found timbers on the ground for the erection of the old Ferry House (afterward Cascade Hotel), which was at that time owned by D. S. T. Weller. During that year the house was so far completed as to admit of occupancy, and the first ferry-boat commenced its trips just above where the bridge across the stream was afterward constructed. Mr. Weller then owned the plat of land afterward occupied by the little hamlet of Cascade, although first purchased by Joel Guild, and it was at that time staked out into lots of one acre each, as the fine fall on the river gave hopes for the speedy erection of mills at that place, some of the most sanguine settlers prophesying that Cascade would outstrip Grand Rapids in the strife for precedence. Mr. Weller sold out his property there to W. S. Gunn, in 1846, and that gentleman held it until after the organization of the township. Mr. Weller ultimately settled in Grand Rapids, where he remained until he transferred his home to Detroit in 1869. Mr. Gunn remained until 1849, when he removed to Grand Rapids and for many years was prominent in the financial and mercantile life of that city.

In the year 1845, a disease, which at the time was denominated the black tongue, broke out among the Indians near Whitneyville, reducing their number in a few weeks to about 200 persons. The band now slowly wasted by disease and removal until less than fifty remained at the time of their removal to the Indian Reservation in 1856. In the year 1846, another family was added to the few settlers on the east side of the river—Jared Strong, the first settler in the forest between E. D. Gove and Ada. The following year a school was opened in a little log house on the river bank, Section 27, for the few pupils of that vicinity. Who the young woman was to whom belongs the rank of pioneer teacher seems to have been lost to history, and it is not decided whether this was the first school taught in the township. It was certainly the first on the east side of the river, and the lumber sawn for the Whitneyville school house, erected in 1848, was among the first work done by the old saw-mill on Sucker Creek, then owned by Peter Whitney. About this time, also, the Kalamazoo stage made its trips through Whitneyville, via Ada, for Grand Rapids.

The first township meeting was held at Whitneyville, April 3, 1848. Peter Teeple was elected supervisor; John R. Stewart, clerk; Asa W. Denison, treasurer; James H. Woodworth and Thomas I. Seeley, school inspectors; Ezra Whitney, Fred A. Marsh and William Degolia, commissioners of highways; Leonard Stewart and Zerah Whitney, justices of the peace; Thomas I. Seeley and Harry Clark, asses-



sors; Morris Denison, O. P. Corson, William Cook and Peter J. Whitney, constables.

About the year 1848, W. H. Chillson came to Cascade and erected a small dwelling house near the hotel; also a log house just across the river, to which, in 1849, Rev. Erie Prince, of Ohio, brought a small stock of Yankee notions and opened a store, or grocery, for those whose nearest trading point was Grand Rapids. Another writer speaks of Elder Prince as follows: "He soon identified himself with the religious and educational needs of the young community. He held at one time the office of school inspector and, up to the time of his death, worked actively in the Sunday School cause, as superintendent in the different neighborhoods, now grown around the first nucleus of settlers. Was a picnic or temperance meeting to be looked after, or were chastened hearts called to lay their treasures in the dust, Elder P. was ever ready to speak the kindly word, pour forth the earnest appeal, or—with tender thought of sympathy—lead the sorrowing mourner to Him who is the 'resurrection and the life.' The fathers and mothers of the little ones of today remember with affectionate respect the tall, slightly bowed form, the kind face, the searching, yet mild gray eye, and the hand lightly laid on the head, as he passed them with some friendly question, or brief admonition—seed sown in life's morning time! In the autumn of 1853 he was called upon to speak before the Kent County Agricultural & Horticultural Society, at Grand Rapids, Oct. 6, and his address will be found in the records of the society for that year. About the year 1856, he donated to the township of Cascade the land occupied by the Cascade cemetery, and there his body lies buried. His grave is shadowed by a young oak, and unmarked—by an explicit clause in his will—by a headstone. He died Aug. 7, 1862, aged 65. In church connection he was a Presbyterian."

It is not altogether certain just when a postoffice was given this township. It is quite probable, however, that it was established at Whitneyville, soon after the organization of the township. The first postmaster was Clement White, who held that position, with only an intermission of one or two years, until the office was discontinued, in 1868. A postoffice was also established in Cascade in 1854, Dr. M. W. Alfred, the first resident physician, being appointed postmaster. A store was opened the same year at Cascade by Seymour Sage and William Gardner. The village of Cascade at one time had bright prospects, but it was left to one side by the railroads, other towns more favored drew the trade and Cascade consequently declined. It has several residences, Catholic, Christian and Methodist Church buildings, but its mercantile life is confined to one general store.

The records of the United States land office show that Erie Prince entered the first land, making his selection on Section 9 in 1832. The second lot was purchased in the year 1833 by John Van Fleet, and the third lot was taken by Thomas H. Hubbard, Oct. 28, 1834.

The following are the names of the gentlemen who have officiated as supervisor of Cascade township from the time of its organization down to the present time: 1848, Peter Teeple; 1850, Asa Denison; 1851, Frederick A. Marsh; 1852, Peter Teeple; 1854, Asa Denison; 1855, Gideon H. Denison; 1858, Peter Teeple; 1859, Gideon H. Denison; 1860, Edgar R. Johnson; 1862, Horace Henshaw; 1864,



Edgar R. Johnson; 1865, Henry Holt; 1866, Henry C. Denison; 1868, Alfred Stow; 1869, Edgar R. Johnson; 1873, Horace Henshaw; 1874, Edgar R. Johnson; 1878, Henry C. Denison; 1879, Edgar R. Johnson; 1882, William C. Denison; 1883, George P. Stark; 1885, Edgar R. Johnson; 1886, George P. Stark; 1887, Edgar R. Johnson; 1888, George P. Stark, 1889, John H. Withey; 1890, Henry B. Proctor; 1897, E. R. Johnson; 1898, William J. Watterson; 1903, J. Martin Schenck; 1911, William J. Watterson, present incumbent.

Edgar R. Johnson was born in Ashland, Green County, New York, Dec. 29, 1832. He removed with his parents from New York to Ohio in 1851, and in the spring of 1852 came to Cascade township and located on Section 17, where the parents died. At the age of twenty-one Mr. Johnson purchased eighty acres of land on Section 18. He taught school several terms and was married May 21, 1861, to Marion, daughter of Henry Holt, of Cascade township. He served as supervisor, being the incumbent of the office seventeen years, and he also served as town clerk four years and school inspector four years.

Horace Henshaw was born Oct. 12, 1811, in Erie County, New York. He left his native state in 1837 for Ohio, and in 1857 located on Section 17 in Cascade township, purchasing eighty acres of land. He held the position of supervisor three terms and was justice of the peace sixteen years.

Henry Holt was born April 6, 1803, at Hampton, Conn. He went from the Nutmeg State to Oneida County, New York, and thence to Herkimer County, in the same State, moving, in 1852, to Section 3, Cascade township. His eldest son, Henry H. Holt, became eminent for ability and served as Lieutenant-Governor of Michigan from 1873 to 1877.

Henry C. Denison was born Dec. 22, 1834, in Oneida County, New York, and came to Kent County with his parents, his father, Gideon H. Denison, being among the early settlers of Cascade township, and also served as supervisor. Henry C. served as supervisor three years, school inspector three years, and also as justice of the peace and superintendent of schools.

George P. Stark was born Aug. 19, 1832, in Summit County, Ohio. During the early years of his life he was engaged in agricultural pursuits, but in 1866 he engaged in the drug business in Palestine, Crawford County. He returned to his former vocation and occupation a year later. In 1871 he engaged in mercantile business in Cascade township, keeping an assorted stock of dry goods, groceries, hardware, etc., and continued the business for a number of years.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### GAINES TOWNSHIP

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES—PHYSICAL FEATURES—EARLY SETTLERS  
—PETER VAN LEW—FIRST ELECTION—FIRST OFFICERS—TROUBLE  
WITH WOLVES—SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

This township, like that of Cascade, is six miles square, comprising township 5 north, range 11 west. It is bounded on the north by the township of Paris, on the east by the township of Caledonia, on



the south by Allegan County, and on the west by the township of Byron. The township is watered with springs and small streams. Plaster and Buck Creeks rise near the center of the township, but they are so small they do not afford much water power. The north half of the township is gently rolling, the soil is good and of almost every variety, and when fully cultivated produces bountiful crops. The southern portion comprises a range of beautiful hills and table lands, admirably adapted to fruit and vine culture, and there are to be found some of the best orchards in the county. Gaines is distinctly an agricultural and horticultural township, and it derives its name from Gaines, N. Y., the place of nativity of some of its pioneer settlers. The soil is mostly sandy loam, easily cultivated and very productive. Those who saw the country in its natural state have left their testimony that it presented to the eye a very beautiful appearance. As already stated, the northern part was rolling with scattering timber, the ground clear from underbrush, and in the spring covered with flowers in an almost endless variety. The southern part was a majestic forest, standing in all its glory, and as yet the woodman's axe had not been heard. The variety of soil and general appearance of the country offered many inducements to those seeking a home in what was then called the Far West. Nature had not been sparing in her gifts, and hill, valley and plain had been waiting for ages for the industry of man to develop them into productive farms.

It is said that Alexander Clark settled in the township, cleared some land, and built a log cabin on Section 8, in the spring of 1837, thus becoming the first settler. He was joined the following autumn by Alexander L. Bouck, who located on Section 5, and Andrew and his son, Rensselaer Mesnard, who located on Section 17; and soon afterward by Orson Cook, Foster Kelley, Charles Kelley, and Joseph Blain, who located on Sections 4 and 5.

Orson Cook, the fourth settler in Gaines township, was born in Seneca County, New York, July 6, 1814. He served a long apprenticeship as a carpenter under his father, learning every detail of the trade and fitting himself carefully as a first-class craftsman. In October, 1829, his parents settled in Wayne County, Michigan, and he worked at his trade in Washtenaw County until August, 1836, when he came to Grand Rapids, and a short time afterward entered 240 acres of land in Gaines township and also eighty acres in Paris, near the old county fair grounds. He returned to Washtenaw County and, in 1837, made a second trip to Kent County. In January, 1838, he came back for a permanent stay. At that time Grand Rapids was but a little village, composed of a few inferior log houses, and Mr. Cook built the Bronson Tavern and belonged to the corps of builders engaged in the erection of the court house, a huge and altogether remarkable structure for the time in which it was built. He built a log house, 16x24 feet, for his family in the wilderness where he fixed his location; he trafficked with the Indians and became expert in the hunt; he cleared with his own hands and under his supervision 150 acres of land and, while striving to place his family in comfort, still remembered the needs that were incident to the community forming around him, and gave his thoughts and energies to the permanent welfare of the public. He aided in the construction of the "Old Gull"



road, built the first school house in Gaines township, locating it on Section 5, and assisted in organizing the townships of Grand Rapids, Paris and Gaines. He was one of the earliest supporters of the Grand Rapids "Enquirer," the first journalistic enterprise in the county. He held the offices of justice of the peace and township treasurer.

Charles Kelley was born in Vermont in 1812, and died in 1870. His parents removed to New York when he was a small boy and resided in that State until he had attained his majority. He received a common school education, and after arriving at the age of twenty-one years located in Southern Michigan, ere the state was admitted to the Union. There for many years he, with much success, pursued agriculture; there his brother located in 1839, and there the father had settled some years before. At the time of his location in Gaines township, which name he was instrumental in selecting, there were only four families in it, whose representatives were Alexander Clark, Alexander L. Bouck, Andrew Mesnard, and Orson Cook; Grand Rapids was as yet only a trading post with a few stores. For about forty years Mr. Kelley was a resident of Kent County, where he lived in his little log cabin, enjoying the frequent visits of the red men who passed his dwelling in groups of twenty-five or thirty, on their way to Grand Rapids, and oft engaging in the chase and slaughter of the deer, which, during his early residence in this section, was a prominent element in their diet. In the official line he served as supervisor of his township during the Civil War, executed the duties of such station with credit to himself and township, and secured for himself the high esteem and respect of his fellow-citizens.

Joseph Blain, a pioneer of Gaines township, was born in Gaines, Orleans County, New York, July 11, 1811. He came to Ionia County in 1835, and to Kent County in December, 1836. He stayed for a time in Grand Rapids. He entered a claim of 160 acres of land in Section 5, then in its original condition. He cut the roads to his farm, roved at will, and became a skilled hunter by his almost daily practice in shooting wild animals for food and self-protection. Mr. Blain was the first justice of the peace in Gaines township.

At the time of which we write, Gaines had little of apparent value to recommend it to the eyes of civilization, being nothing more or less than thirty-six square miles of wilderness. Yet to the hardy, enterprising, foresighted pioneers the heavy forests of beech and maple, and in some localities pine and oak, the abundant supply of fresh water, with an average supply of bear, wolves, deer, wild turkeys, etc., possessed a charm that was irresistible. And the ice once broken the development of its resources was only a question of time. At this time the only thoroughfare within the limits of the territory of Gaines township was a road known as the "Old Gull" road, running a zig-zag course from north to south. And the first settlers seemed for evident reasons to strike for the vicinity of this road. And we now find some of the richest farms in the county near its line. It was afterward straightened as the township became settled, to correspond with the section lines, and became a part of the stage route from Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo, until the completion of the plank road, in 1854. Among the other early settlers, who were identified with the organization, growth and prosperity of the township, were



Daniel Woodward, Stephen A. Hammond, John E. Woods, Charles B. Keefer, Benjamin Colburn, R. C. Sessions, James Reynolds, William Kelley, John Wolcott, R. R. Jones, William Hendrick, Aaron Brewer, Thomas and Wilmot H. Blain, William Budlong, James M. Pelton, Peter Van Lew, Eseck Burlingame, James T. Crumback and Bryan Greenman.

Rodney C. Sessions was born in Windsor County, Vermont, Feb. 17, 1824. His father died when Rodney was but seven years old, and in 1834 he came with his mother to Oakland County, and soon thereafter to Shiawassee County, returning seven years later to Oakland. In November, 1846, he went to Allegan County, and in November, 1847, removed to Gaines township and located on Sections 28 and 29. He taught school in the township three years in that early day, and could well be named the "pioneer schoolmaster."

William Hendrick was born in Chenango County, New York, May 5, 1801. He came with his family to Kent County in 1852, and celebrated the election of President Pierce by moving into their new log cabin on their farm on Section 5. The cabin was 16x28 feet, in the midst of a wilderness, and was more to that family than a palace would be today. The forest that surrounded that home gave place to fair, fertile fields, golden with grain and emerald with waving corn, and an unbroken family circle lived for years to rejoice in a well earned prosperity.

Wilmot H. Blain was born in Gaines, Orleans County, New York, Jan. 23, 1821. He grew to manhood on his father's farm, where he remained until twenty-five years old, going to school winters until he was seventeen. In September, 1842, he came to this county and entered 160 acres of land on Section 19, Gaines township, and in 1846 removed here with his family, consisting of himself, wife and one child. With his own hands he chopped and cleared seventy-five acres of land on the northwest and northeast quarters of Section 19. No white man had cut a tree in the forest where he made a clearing and built a log house. It was 20x24 feet, and the family occupied it in cheerful content for twenty years.

Peter Van Lew was born in Seneca County, New York, Feb. 18, 1803. He began an apprenticeship to the clothier's trade in Lodi, N. Y., at the age of fourteen, served seven years and worked at the business ten years, after which he kept a "tavern" about three and one-half years. He subsequently rented a fulling mill, carding machine and oil mill, which he operated four years and then purchased them. Meantime he had signed as security for three men to the amount of \$9,000, and by their failure was reduced to poverty. In November, 1845, he came to this county and settled on Section 31, Gaines township, where he "took up" 311 acres of Uncle Sam's territory, still in its primitive state, and no road nearer than the "old Kalamazoo stage route." He began anew in the unbroken Michigan forest with little available means. He went to Battle Creek and worked through the harvest season, and with the proceeds of his arduous toil bought three cows, a yoke of oxen, ten bushels of wheat, a grain cradle and a dress for his wife. He returned with his riches to his home and family, who had spent the time of his absence in the woods, two miles from their nearest neighbors. He worked three



harvest seasons at Battle Creek, devoting the remainder of the years to the improvement of his farm. In 1854 he built a tavern, 40 feet wide by 65 feet long and two stories high, and this he continued to run as a hotel until 1876. In the early days Indians were numerous, and Pete, a famous deer hunter, spent one winter with Mr. Van Lew and kept him supplied with venison. The copper-colored ramblers frequently camped on his farm. He was one of the organizers of the township and was elected its first supervisor, which office he held six successive terms and one term afterward.

James T. Crumback was a native of Wayne County, New York, born Jan. 31, 1808. In 1811 his parents removed to Ontario, Canada, and in 1824, at the age of sixteen, he came to this county with a band of Indians on a hunting and trapping expedition. In 1853 he located land in Gaines township, on Section 26, and the following year took possession as a landholder. The country was still largely in its original condition, infested with plenty of Indians and wild animals. He won wide renown as a deer hunter, and had a supply of adventures and anecdotes of his experiences and those of others, sufficient to fill a respectable volume. The first year of his residence in the township he killed 158 deer, and, from first to last, the aggregate of his successes with that kind of game alone numbered 2,997, besides other varieties. Mr. Crumback was a physician of the Thompsonian school. He studied the best authorities on herb medication and practiced fifty years.

Aside from its agricultural prospects, the township offered but little inducement to business men. Plaster and Buck Creeks both rise near the center of the township, but they were too small during most of the year for mill sites. There was, however, a small water mill erected on the latter stream about the year 1852, by Eseck Burlingame, on Section 18, and this mill cut the lumber for some of the first frame buildings in the township. Most of the pioneers, as is usual, were poor, having hardly means enough to enable them to purchase their land of the government at \$1.25 an acre, get their families and household goods transported through the wilderness and gain a foothold on their farms. But with persistent energy they set to work and the heavy forests began to disappear. It was soon found to be one of the richest tracts in the vicinity for agricultural purposes and is still considered one of the best in the county.

The first township election was held at the old red school house, on the northeast corner of Section 8, April 3, 1848, and the following officers were elected: Peter Van Lew, supervisor; James M. Pelton, clerk; Foster Kelley and Abraham T. Andrews, assessors; Charles Kelley, treasurer; Orson Cook and Levi Cheney, directors of the poor; Daniel Rice, Levi M. Dewey and William Kelley, road commissioners; Lorenzo W. Sandford, John E. Guild, Foster Kelley and Daniel Williams, constables; Rensselaer Mesnard and A. T. Andrews, school inspectors; Joseph Blain, Josiah Drake and Robert R. Jones, justices of the peace.

Among the resolutions passed at this first meeting was one offered by Orson Cook, providing that "a tax of \$2.50 be raised for every wolf killed in the township." Wolves were rather troublesome neighbors in those days and the author of the resolution probably



owed them a grudge for their former depredations. Wolves made frequent visits to the early settlers and would make the very earth tremble with their howlings and complaints to the intruders in their time-honored home; and they usually levied a tax before morning. And they were only satisfied with the best quality of mutton. One occupation of the boys and larger girls of that day was to fire the old stumps about the place in the evening to scare away the wolves. About the year 1846, there was a wolf who had her beat from the vicinity of Gaines to Gull Prairie, in Barry County, and was known as the "Gull Prairie wolf," and she usually made the round trip once a week. The dogs would not molest her and she seemed to fear neither man nor beast. She had been caught once in a steel trap and all efforts to entrap her again were for a long time unsuccessful. Even the children, in time, learned to distinguish her voice from other wolves and were in the habit of listening for her on certain nights. She seldom disappointed them, and made night hideous with her dismal howls. She finally killed four sheep in one night on the premises of Mr. Mesnard, the sheep, however, belonging to Mr. Rice. R. R. Jones, who lived near, requested the owner to leave one of the carcasses which madame wolf had partially devoured, and he did so. Mr. Jones and Orson Cook then held a council of war. It was determined to make one more effort to entrap her. Accordingly, two traps were set about the carcass. But on her next visit she contrived to remove the carcass several rods, taking care to avoid the traps. Another council resulted in some more traps. Four were set—placing in the intermediate spaces small pieces of iron, which were left in sight, while the traps were carefully concealed. This time they outwitted her. For, after visiting two barns in the neighborhood and trying to obtain a fresh quarter of mutton, she went and put her identical game foot into one of the traps. Early on the following morning, Messrs. Jones and Cook took the trail in pursuit. They obtained a glimpse of their victim on Section 15 and, after following her to the vicinity of Duncan Lake, in Barry County, succeeded in getting her headed toward home. They followed and overtook her on Section 25. She surrendered and submitted to being bound with bark and slung to a pole, the two hunters resolving to carry her back alive to the scene of her recent murders. But they were soon satisfied to leave all but the pelt, for which they received one dollar, and ten and a half dollars in the shape of county and state bounties. Soon afterward they caught a neighbor's boy by the heel in one of the same traps. A large, good-natured specimen of the "Genus Yankee," about twenty years of age, who, anxious to become versed in all the mysteries of woodcraft, was peering about to see how a wolf trap was set. He found out, and also ascertained how one was sprung. His cries soon brought his father to his assistance and gave the wolf-hunters no further trouble.

A log school house was built on the northeast corner of Section 8, about the year 1842. It was a rude structure, with a large fireplace in one end of it. The seats were made of slabs with the flat side up, supported by legs resting upon the floor, and the few desks it contained were made by driving pins into the logs and laying boards on them. In that uncouth and uncomfortable building many



who went from there to other parts of the country secured the rudiments of an education. The first United Brethren Church of Gaines was founded and erected a building in 1867. The inhabitants of the settlements having provided rude habitations for themselves and their families, began to think of something further. A bond of union had been cemented among those who together had struggled through the difficulties of pioneer life. They had learned the value of association in temporal things, and found that united efforts accomplished more than the efforts of single individuals. Reasoning thus in regard to spiritual things, they resolved to organize a church, and thus secure for themselves, their families, and the whole community, the advantages which can be obtained in no other way.

Many and varied were the scenes through which the fathers passed in their pioneer days, and those who now live in Gaines township can hardly realize the changes which have taken place during the past three-quarters of a century. The log cabins have been replaced by more comfortable dwellings, and these again in many instances by fine mansions. The log school houses and also the modest frame school houses are gone, and their places are occupied by beautiful and commodious edifices. The inhabitants today are enjoying good homes, surrounded by every advantage necessary to make them comfortable and happy.

The following is a list of the supervisors of Gaines township from its organization to the present time: 1848, Peter Van Lew; 1854, Alexander Clark; 1856, Peter Van Lew; 1857, Aaron Brewer; 1861, Charles Kelley; 1863, Aaron Brewer; 1864, Charles Kelley; 1866, James M. Pelton; 1867, Charles Kelley; 1868, Henry L. Wise; 1869, James M. Pelton; 1871, Aaron Brewer; 1872, William J. Hardy; 1873, Aaron Brewer; 1877, Valentine Geib; 1878, Lewis A. Solomon; 1880, Nelson Kelley; 1886, Lewis A. Solomon; 1887, Nelson Kelley; 1888, Lewis A. Solomon; 1889, Valentine Geib; 1890, Lewis A. Solomon; 1893, Nelson Kelley; 1897, L. A. Solomon; 1900, Horace T. Barnaby; 1901, Leroy D. Allen; 1903, Charles F. Parker; 1908, Jesse W. Pickett; 1911, Wilson Plants; 1913, Valentine Geib; 1914, Frank King; 1916, Samuel J. Hanna, present incumbent.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### LOWELL TOWNSHIP

PHYSICAL FEATURES — EARLY HISTORY — THE ROBINSON FAMILY — PHILANDER TRACY — INDIANS — LUTHER LINCOLN — SCHOOL ROMANCE — RELIGIOUS EFFORTS — HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF LOWELL — ORGANIZATION OF TOWNSHIP — FIRST OFFICERS — LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

This subdivision contains the territory of a regular Congressional township, and it is one of the wealthiest and best improved sections of the county. It has, perhaps, as much tillable land per acre as any other township in the eastern tier, and it contains some of the choicest farms within the county. The soil is rich in the bottom lands of



the Grand River, which flows through the township, and much of it is of unsurpassed fertility. The higher lands, of course, though good grazing fields and reasonably productive in the growth of grains and fruits, are less fertile than the valleys.

Lowell was organized by an act of the Legislature, approved March 9, 1848. The act creating it provided that "town No. 6 north, of range 9 west, in the county of Kent, be, and the same is hereby set off from the township of Vergennes, and organized into a separate township, by the name of Lowell, and the first township meeting therein shall be held at the house of D. A. Marvin, in said township."

The early history of this township has much to do with that of the county and will be found under that head. Its first settlement was made in the year 1829, when Daniel Marsac came from Detroit and went among the Indians in the vicinity of the present village of Lowell, as a trader, although a regular trading post was not established until 1831, when Mr. Marsac built a log hut on the south side of Grand River, near the present site of the railroad station. At that time Kent County was an almost unbroken wilderness, the only roads were the Indian trails and the only means of navigation was the canoe, or "dugout," as it is sometimes called; or, for more extensive transportation, a raft made of poles, or small logs, fastened together. In the spring of 1835, a family (or families all related) by the name of Robinson, numbering in all forty-four persons, set out from the State of New York and, arriving at Detroit, embarked on a small vessel for Grand Haven via Mackinaw. On June 7 of that year they reached the mouth of Grand River and, putting their household goods, etc., on rafts, and "paddling their own canoes," made their way up the river and settled in Kent and Ottawa Counties, principally the latter, in the vicinity of Blendon. These were only a part of the Robinsons. Rix Robinson had been trading with the Indians at Thornapple—now called Ada—for several years previous to this, and had one son by the squaw whom he had taken for a wife soon after he came there. A year later, in 1836, another brother, named Lewis, came with his family and settled on the west bank of Flat River, in the south part of what is now the village of Lowell. He was soon followed by Rodney, a brother from the Blendon settlement, who remained one year with Lewis and then removed up the river into the present township of Vergennes, where he and another brother, Lucas, made good farms. Philander Tracy, a relative of the Robinson family, who later came to be known as Judge Tracy, also came from the State of New York and was for some time with Lewis Robinson.

Philander Tracy was a native of Cayuga County, New York, and began active life as a sailor on the lakes, between Buffalo and Chicago. With his schooner he visited Grand Haven as early as 1824. He came to Grand Rapids in 1836. Two years later he moved to Lowell, returned to Grand Rapids in 1845 and resided there until he died, in 1873, at the age of seventy-two years. His principal occupation was that of lumberman, in which he was moderately successful. In 1840, under the old county court system, he was elected associate judge and served one term. Hence his title of "Judge."

The timber for Lewis Robinson's first log hut was cut two or three miles up Flat River and was floated down by the help of Indi-



ans, who were always friendly to those who used them well. There were good and bad Indians, as well as good and bad whites. One Indian, named Negake, who was not, however, a member of either of the tribes then occupying this portion of the State, but a renegade from some Eastern tribe, and who had taken up his abode with the Pottawotomies, caused the whites some trouble, and was reported to have killed one of the government surveyors some years previous, when an attempt was made to survey and throw into market all lands up to the forty-third degree of latitude, which parallel cut across a bend in the river in this township, and took a strip about a mile in width on the north side, to which survey the Indians objected. Subsequently the river was made the frontier line, and no lands north of the river were put into market until August, 1839. A tract of land lying on the east side of Flat River was set apart as University lands. In 1836, Luther Lincoln, from Grand Rapids, formerly from the south part of the State, where he had been quite a wealthy man, came and settled on a small lot of this University land and built a log house, which was afterward used by Don A. Marvin as a tavern.

Luther Lincoln came to the valley in 1832, was a moving and somewhat eccentric character; first in Grandville, then in Grand Rapids building a mill, then up Flat River, where he was called "Trapper Lincoln." His longest residence was at or near Greenville, toward the close of his life. He is accredited with doing the first plowing of lands along Grand River, and raising corn in 1833, where the village of Grandville now stands.

Mr. Lincoln and Rodney and Lucas Robinson helped the Indians to fence in a tract of about 100 acres on the east side of Flat River and about one mile from Grand River, for a planting ground, to prevent any trouble on account of their letting their cattle run at large on "Uncle Sam's domain," as the cattle would have been likely to destroy their crops, and this would naturally have led to hostilities. Rodney Robinson gave the statement that the Indians were usually good neighbors, and even Mr. Lincoln, whose mind was somewhat wandering, which fact constantly led him into some trouble with the early white settlers, always got along finely with the Indians; and when, on account of some unpleasantness with the whites, he was obliged to leave this point, he went up the river a long distance and erected a saw-mill, right in the midst of the Indian country. They were often employed to work for the early white settlers, and were generally well paid, although it was usually best to pay them in provisions and other necessaries, rather than in money, for, if they got money, many of them would go off to places where they could get liquor and come home drunk, when they would be quarrelsome and dangerous neighbors, or even to their Indian friends, until the fire-water and its effects were gone. No liquor was allowed to be sold to them in this vicinity if the settlers could prevent it, but itinerant traders would sometimes undertake to sell it to them in order to make it easier to cheat them in their trades.

In 1837, Charles Newton, Matthew Patrick, Samuel P. Wolf, Ira A. Danes, William Vandeusen and Mr. Francisco—nearly all of whom were from New York—settled along the north side of Grand River on the old Grand River road, from two to five miles west of Flat



River. This road came from Ionia, by the way of Fallassburg—at which point the first bridge was built across Flat River in 1840, previous to which the river was forded—and passed about two miles west of the mouth of the river, thence along down Grand River, near the side of the bluffs.

The following bit of school romance is handed down and taken from another and much earlier publication: In 1837, the people of this vicinity organized a school district, including all the settlers on Flat River, and it was the only school dsitriect at that time between Grand Rapids and Ionia. They erected a log school house, in 1838, in the north part of the present village of Lowell, on the west side of Flat River, and employed Miss Caroline Beard, from New York State, to teach the first school that summer. The following winter the district furnished a cook stove and provisions, and Miss Beard lived in the school house and kept the school. Caleb D. Page, who had taken up a piece of land near the Fallassburg of later days, took matrimony into his head and Miss Beard to his heart, and the bonds of wedlock were entered into by this couple in the school house.

In 1839, William B. Lyon and Ransom Rolf, also from New York, settled on the same road, near those previously mentioned. At the time of the sale of lands in this tract—August, 1839, as before stated—the Indians attempted to enter and hold the lands they had been tilling, under the pre-emption laws, but, as the agent knew nothing about whether the Red Man could hold land by those laws, the matter was referred to the general land office and, while waiting the decision, Philander Tracy attempted to gain possession by erecting a small hut on it and sowing the field to oats, but the results of his efforts were destroyed by the Indians. His papers which had been granted were afterward revoked and, although the decision was that Indians could not enter lands in their own name, they loaned money to a Frenchman by the name of Nontah, and he bought the land, and afterward, failing to pay back the money, he gave them a deed of it. The lands were afterward found to be a part of the "University Grant," and so also was the land taken by Lincoln. When Mr. Lincoln left, he sold his claim to Daniel Marsac, who, in 1847, platted it under the name of "the village of Dansville," which name it retained until about the year 1855. In 1850, Mr. Marsac sold his claims to Edwin Avery, of Ionia, who then paid the State and obtained a complete title to the same. John B. Shear and some others came in about the year 1844 and settled in or near the present village of Lowell. In December, 1846, Cyprian S. Hooker, formerly from Connecticut, came from Saranac, Ionia County, where he had been a pioneer and almost the only settler. Mr. Hooker erected the first frame house in the township, which was also the first in the village. His lumber was brought from Saranac. He commenced his house on Dec. 18, 1846, and on the ensuing Christmas moved into it with his family. In 1847, Mr. Hooker erected the grist mill on the east side of Flat River, afterward owned and enlarged by William W. Hatch, who erected another large mill on the west side of the river in 1867. When Mr. Hooker first erected his mill it was run by an over-shot water-wheel—water being brought by means of a race, a distance of about forty rods from the island in Flat River. In 1849 Mr. Hooker constructed a dam across the river, just below Bridge street.



The Congregationalists were the pioneers in religious effort in the township of Lowell, they having held meetings at a very early date. The first religious service held was in 1849, and was conducted by Rev. S. S. Brown, a minister of that denomination. The meeting was held at the house of C. S. Hooker, and Mr. Brown preached the sermon. A Methodist Episcopal Church was organized later, and the first church building for that denomination in Lowell was erected in 1859. In the same year a neat and unpretending building was erected for purposes of worship by those of the Baptist faith.

The first burial places in the township were usually private grounds, established on the farms, as necessity required. The Lowell village cemetery is the oldest public burying ground in the township, and this sacred spot contains the remains of many of the early pioneers of Lowell.

The history of the village of Lowell is inseparably connected with that of the township, and it was platted in 1848 by Daniel Marsac, who named the place Dansville. The first postmaster was Philander Tracy. In 1854 the village was again platted with the same name, by Abel Avery, as the record shows, but on Feb. 4, 1857, by Legislative act the name was changed to Lowell. An act to legalize an incorporation previously made by the supervisors was passed in 1859. The village was incorporated anew in March, 1861, and under this authority the first charter election was held. The charter has been several times amended, and several additions to the original plat had been made prior to the final incorporation of the village. In 1850 Abel Avery purchased the Marsac plat, and he added some territory, making upward of 100 acres on the east side of Flat River. In 1854 Wickham & Richards platted ninety-three acres on the west side. In July, 1868, Fox's addition of fifty-two acres, north of Wickham & Richards, was surveyed. Peter Lee's addition, north of Avery's, forty-eight acres, was platted in March, 1870. In the same year were platted Snell's addition, fifty acres, and the Ellsworth plat of sixty acres, of which twenty acres was within the village limits and the rest in the town of Vergennes. In 1863 a plat was made on the south side of the river, on the line of the railroad, and the place was named Segwun.

In April, 1869, under the authority of a Legislative act, a re-survey of the village was made by direction of the village board. Lowell soon came to be a place of importance. With the construction of the first railroad to the village in 1858, a new impetus was given to the flourishing business of the place, and through all the years of its existence it has been a place of considerable importance and a very popular trading point, sustained by an excellent farming country. The population of Lowell in 1910 was 1,761. In writing of churches, schools, and other public enterprises, the village has been frequently mentioned. It is located on the Grand Trunk and a branch of the Pere Marquette Railways, and thus has excellent means of communication with the outside world. Lowell is one of the handsomest and most desirable places of residence of its class in Michigan. As a business center it is an influential factor in Kent County. Many important manufacturing industries are located there. The various industries incident to villages of this size, together with the so-



cial, religious, educational and political functions, are all represented, while the mercantile and other business interests are quite extensive. The business places, many of which are filled with most desirable and varied assortments, are mostly located in substantial brick buildings of good style and architecture. The streets are wide and shaded by deciduous trees, bordered by beautiful lawns and fine residences. There is an efficient system of water works, and water of the best quality is supplied. The village also has a good electric light plant, and the public places are all nicely lighted, while most of the stores and many residences enjoy this most brilliant and cleanly illuminator.

Among the pioneers in that part of Lowell township which lies south of Grand River was George Post, who came from Connecticut in 1842 and settled on the northwest corner of Section 23, at the crossing of the Territorial Road, from Portland to Grand Rapids, and the one from Battle Creek via Hastings to the trading post then established by Daniel Marsac, at Lowell. He was the first, and for three years the only settler south of the present line of the Grand Trunk Railroad, within the township. In 1843, Mainard Chaterdon, with his wife and family of three sons and three daughters, came from Calhoun County, Michigan (formerly from the State of New York), and went nearly to the southwest corner of the township, on Section 31. In 1848-9, Harrison Wickham, Peter Hornbrook, Charles Gordon, George Monk and W. H. Montague settled in the south and southwest part of the township, followed in 1850 to 1854 by John Brannan, William Pratt, John Yeiter, Jacob and Christian Loyer, George Acker, Jacob Yeiter, James Easterby, James Wallace and William Proctor, most of whom were from Ohio and of German and English descent.

John Yeiter was a native of Germany, born June 5, 1825. With his parents he came to America in 1832 and located in Crawford County, Ohio, where the parents died. In 1850 Mr. Yeiter came to Lowell and bought 160 acres of wild land at sixty-two cents an acre, and to this tract he afterward added 120 acres. Jacob Yeiter, his brother, was born in 1827. The early years of his life were spent in carpentry, but later his occupation was that of a farmer. He came to Kent County in 1849 and settled in Lowell in 1853.

James Easterby was born in Yorkshire, England, Feb. 1, 1829, and lived in his native country until 1853, at which time he came to the United States and located about fourteen miles from the city of Detroit. There he remained until the fall of 1855, when he came to Kent County, where for several months he found employment as a common laborer, husbanding his scanty earnings the meantime, for the purpose of investing in land when a favorable opportunity presented itself. Upon the land which he purchased, and which at the time was an unbroken woodland, he erected a small log cabin consisting of a single room, and then took jobs of chopping wood and clearing land, in order to meet the payments on his home when they became due. In order to procure the furniture for his house, he worked some months for a firm in Grand Rapids, taking his pay in such articles as were needed to make home comfortable. Mr. Easterby became a very successful man of affairs, and in addition to general farming he paid considerable attention to the breeding of live stock,



especially cattle, of which he possessed some superior breeds, rearing and marketing a large number each year.

William Proctor was born in Ingleton, County of York, England, Nov. 20, 1808, and died Dec. 22, 1895. In 1853 he came with his family to Michigan and purchased 320 acres of land in Section 27 of Lowell township. His subsequent life was devoted to the improvement of his farm and he attended to the affairs himself until he was more than eighty years of age.

Rural postoffices for the accommodation of the people were early established, some of which were kept in the farm houses. These have been discontinued on the adoption of the admirable system of "rural free delivery," which brings almost every farmer in daily contact with the outside world, and his mail is left at his door. Add to this the convenience of the modern telephone and the isolation of country life is reduced to the minimum.

The township of Lowell was organized, as already stated, in 1848, being previously a part of the township of Vergennes, which originally included all of the east part of Kent County. The first township meeting was held at the house of Timothy White, contrary it seems to the provisions of the Legislative enactment, which named the house of D. A. Marvin. The first township officers were as follows: Supervisor, Cyprian S. Hooker; clerk, Timothy White; treasurer, Henry Church; justices, C. S. Hooker, Daniel McEwen, Samuel P. Rolf and Ira A. Danes. From that beginning until the present year the following named gentlemen have filled the position of supervisor: 1848, Cyprian S. Hooker; 1849, Harrison Wickham; 1852, Cyprian S. Hooker; 1854, John Brown; 1857, Cyprian S. Hooker; 1858, Jacob Chapman; 1859, Arvine Peck; 1860, Charles B. Carter; 1864, Almon M. Elsworth; 1870, Robert Hunter, Jr.; 1871, Edmund Lee; 1872, Simeon Hunt; 1873, Charles R. Hine; 1874, Robert Hunter, Jr.; 1878, Almon M. Elsworth; 1879, Leonard Hunt; 1881, Jarvis C. Train; 1883, Milton C. Barber; 1884, Henry Mitchell; 1885, Leonard H. Hunt; 1886, Henry Mitchell; 1888, Augustus W. Weeks; 1891, Christopher Bergin; 1892, Augustus W. Weeks; 1893, Christopher Bergin; 1896, Frank N. White; 1904, Leonard H. Hunt; 1906, Christopher Bergin, present incumbent.

Charles B. Carter was born in Lowville, Lewis County, New York, Sept. 21, 1816. He assisted his father on the farm and worked at lumbering until twenty-one years of age, when he purchased a part of the paternal homestead near Savannah, N. Y., and began life for himself as a tiller of the soil. He remained in his native State until 1853, when he came to Kent County and bought a farm in Lowell township. For some years he added to his income by taking contracts to cut and deliver pine timber, and he frequently employed from twenty to forty men to assist in floating the logs to their destination in the spring seasons.

Edmund Lee was born in England in 1827, and was educated in the State of New York. In 1853 he went to California, and after a stay of a few months proceeded to Australia, where he accumulated a sum of money in the gold mines sufficient to give him a respectable start in the world. He came to Kent County in 1859, and

was engaged fourteen years in the village of Lowell in mercantile pursuits. He then turned his attention to farming and followed that occupation the remainder of his active career.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### WYOMING TOWNSHIP

DATE OF ORGANIZATION — PRESENT BOUNDARIES — NATURAL ADVANTAGES—EARLY SETTLERS — LETTER OF LUTHER LINCOLN — WILLIAM R. GODWIN—JUSTUS C. ROGERS—DESTRUCTIVE CYCLONE—GRANDVILLE—EARLY DAY INCIDENTS—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING AND OFFICERS—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

This township was organized by an act of the State Legislature, approved March 9, 1848, with the boundaries to include all of town 6 north, range 12 west, but the encroachment of the city of Grand Rapids has taken away from its territory three and one-half sections of land, and it has been deemed proper, also, to detach from it all that portion which lies north of Grand River, and this has been attached to Walker township, so that now the township of Wyoming contains only about twenty-eight sections of land.

The township is traversed by Buck Creek, a stream of considerable size, on each side of which are broad, level tracts of land of the rich black loam variety, which is exceptionally fertile as corn and grain land. The higher lands are strong and fertile clay soil, which yield abundant returns under proper cultivation. Being abundantly watered from the many springs and small creeks or branches which abound, these lands are especially valuable for grazing purposes, the stock-raising industry being a source of profit as well as pleasure. Buck Creek, with the many spring branches, or runs, constitutes the drainage of the township, as well as the water supply, and Grand River forms the northwestern boundary of the township. With these enumerated advantages, it is not strange that a large majority of the farmers are extensively engaged in the stock business, and many of them feed the entire grain product of their farms to stock, raised by themselves, while others are buyers and shippers. The yearly growth of this industry is a feature which distinguishes the township from a really agricultural community.

Extensive fruit growing is another profitable industry which commands large investment and correspondingly large returns. There are those who have kept abreast of the onward march of horticultural development, and in the scientific propagation and culture of the varieties best adapted to the soil and climate have realized abundant returns.

Traditional history at best is unreliable, but becomes especially so when transmitted to the third or fourth generation. However, it is not necessary to depend upon tradition to learn of the early residents of the township of Wyoming. The first efforts toward the settlement of the township were made by David Tucker, who settled at Grandville in 1832. In the same year Gideon H. Gordon settled at



Grandville. In 1833, Luther Lincoln, Joseph B. Copeland, Hiram Jenison, and William R. Godwin settled at Grandville, Jonathan F. Chubb on Section 4, Myron Roys on Section 9, and Henry West on Section 20. Some idea of this portion of the valley can be gleaned from the following letter from the eccentric Luther Lincoln. It was written to his parents and we think we are safe in saying that it has never before been published:

“Grand River, 4th mo. 22d, 1833.

“Dear Father and Mother:

“I take this opportunity to inform you that I and children are well and hope you are all enjoying the same Blessing. I received a letter from you 2 weeks ago asking some questions Respecting the country and other affairs which I expect are Sufitently answered in my last letter.

“If you want to know town and county that I live in a town without inhabitance without name in the County of Kent 6 miles below the rapids on the united States Road from Detroit to the mouth of the river laid last Faul.

“I have been up the grand River to get my flour and potatoes 60 miles on the big fork 25 miles from Gull Prairiey. It runs through an excelent country of timber on one side with many rapids which was hard to acend with an empy boat but we went down quick. Struck a few times on the rocks. We went down 30 mile in half a day. A grate mill Stream; a grate Spring Brook; 6 rood wide. it is said not to freeze over. Here the land is for Sale a man can have his choice. It has jest come into the office. Whare I am thare is a prareia good timber land good opening good pine some good grass. I have on 2 lots a peice of medow the best that I ever saw. It is dry enough.

“This country will Settle and must. I have ben to see my cat-tle today in all 28. They look well. Thare coats are about half off. In about 1 week I shall put 5 yoak on 1 Plow and Plow as long as it will do to Plant. It has ben a modrate open winter and open. It is begun to be warm. My hogs I have not herd of for 1 month tell to-day. I see an Indian looking after horses. He said they near the head of a certain Crick. (Signed) LUTHER LINCOLN.”

Hiram Jenison settled near Grandville, just west of the county line, in 1836, and soon afterward came his brothers, Luman and Lucius (twins). They were natives of St. Lawrence County, New York. Though some miles out, the Jenisons were always actively associated with Grand Rapids people in society and business, and they seemed almost identical in citizenship. The twins never married, though they passed the middle of the last decade of the length of life usually allotted to man.

William R. Godwin came to Kent County in 1833, and his parents with their family followed in 1834, all settling in Grandville. Shortly after locating a farm in the new country Mr. Godwin suffered the loss of nearly all of his earthly effects by fire, which destroyed, among other things, a stock of general merchandise, which he brought with him for the purpose of opening a trading post. This unfortunate occurrence served effectually to change the plans of the pioneer settler, as he soon afterward purchased land from the government, and to which he removed, about 1835, and began clearing a

farm in what is now Wyoming township, about two miles south of Grand Rapids. He prospered as an agriculturist, made many substantial improvements upon his purchase, and at the time of his death, in 1861, was in possession of a comfortable competence, including a beautiful farm of 120 acres, besides other properties of various kinds. For a number of years he was proprietor of the Godwin House on the old plank road leading from Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo, a favorite resort of the traveling public in pioneer times and stage coach days, and he also assisted in the construction of that highway, as a contractor. He continued to accommodate such travelers as saw fit to patronize his house as long as he lived, and he earned the reputation of a most popular and genial host. He enjoyed the distinction of having been the first person elected to the office of supervisor in Wyoming township, in 1848. Up to that time Wyoming had been included in Byron township.

Jonathan F. Chubb, soon after his arrival, took a farm in Wyoming, where he lived nearly twenty years, and then moved into Grand Rapids and built him a stone residence on Front, near Leonard street, where he spent the remainder of his life. He took an interest in manufacturing farming implements.

Myron Roys was born in Sheffield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, Dec. 1, 1808. On reaching his majority he went out into the world to help himself, and in 1833 came to Grandville, and in December of the same year located his farm. He then went to St. Joseph County, where his brother had located one year previously, and returned in February. He built a small log house and managed his own domestic affairs while clearing his land. He held various offices of trust, such as supervisor, treasurer and constable.

In 1834, Roswell Britton, Julius C. Abel, Ephraim P. Walker, Abraham Bryant, and Josiah McCarthy settled at Grandville, Robert Howlett and George Thomson on Section 9, and Alvin H. Wansey on Section 1.

Julius C. Abel was born at Granville, Washington County, New York, Sept. 13, 1793. He was a lawyer by profession and came to Wyoming, June 1, 1834, locating on Section 8. He built a home and improved his land, but practiced his profession many years, and died July 1, 1871, in the city of Grand Rapids.

Charles H. Oaks, Joseph A. Brooks, Thomas H. Buxton, and Manly Patchen settled at Grandville in 1835, and in the same year Ransom Sawyer and Richard Moore settled on Section 19, and Justus C. Rogers on Section 14, and Eli and Erastus Yeomans also came to Grandville.

Justus C. Rogers was born in Middletown, Rutland County, Vermont, Feb. 28, 1813, and died Jan. 29, 1883. He immigrated to Michigan in 1837, and purchased government land four miles east of the present site of Grandville, and upon which he erected a small frame house—one of the first habitations of the kind in that section of the country. After putting the finishing touches to his dwelling, Mr. Rogers went to Grand Rapids to get his wife, who was staying in that town until the house could be gotten in readiness for occupancy, but imagine his surprise and consternation to find upon his return the entire structure a mass of broken, twisted timbers, scattered about in



every direction, a cyclone having swept through the country in his absence and left dire destruction in its wake. Nothing daunted, Mr. Rogers at once went to work with redoubled diligence and in due time a comfortable log house was erected and made ready to receive the family. Mr. Rogers became a prosperous farmer and large land owner, obtaining by government entry and other purchase a tract of 240 acres, fertile and well timbered. He was a prime mover in the organization of the Park Congregational Church of Grand Rapids, contributing largely to its support and ministering to its prosperity in many other ways.

In 1836 Hiram Osgood, Orrey Hill, Nathan White, Charles Wheeler, Dwight Rankin, James Lockwood, Jacob Rogers, Charles J. Rogers, Leonard Stoneburner, and Mr. Fetterman located at Grandville and in different parts of the township.

Jacob Rogers came from Rutland County, Vermont, in 1836. He was a sturdy farmer and lived a little way south of the city of Grand Rapids upward of thirty years.

Leonard Stoneburner was born in Canada, Jan. 15, 1801, and his parents removed to Rochester, N. Y., in his infancy. In 1836 he came to Grandville and bought forty acres of land, thus becoming one of the early pioneers of Wyoming township. He died Aug. 5, 1872.

Among the settlers of 1837 and 1838 are found the names of Lewis Moody, Chase Edgerly, Col. Hathaway, William Butts, James P. Scott, Jotham Hall, Savoy R. Beals, Cyrus Jones, Cyrus Marsh, Horace Wilder, and James McCray. Edward Feakins was also one of the earliest settlers.

Cyrus Jones was born in Plattsburgh, Clinton County, New York, in 1803. Exciting rumors of the opportunities for making money with teams in Kent County, Michigan, reached the ambitious citizens of the Empire State, and under their inspiration Mr. Jones purchased two teams and, in 1834, started for the land of promise with his family and possessions. They came from Buffalo to Detroit by water and remained at the latter place ten days; then started for Grand Rapids with a sick child, who died on the route. Mr. Jones had 25 cents in cash when he arrived at Gull Prairie, fifty miles from Grand Rapids. He exchanged his horses for oxen and followed an Indian trail. Going down a hill, Mrs. Jones fell from the wagon and narrowly escaped being crushed to death under the wheels. They settled on a farm which is now in the city of Grand Rapids, and there they remained two years, after which they bought forty acres in Paris township and built a house. Six months afterward it was completely wrecked by the cyclone which also played havoc with Justus C. Rogers' place of habitation, and they then moved to Grandville, where Mr. Jones was engaged in a saw-mill two and one-half years, in the employ of Louis Campau. In 1840 he purchased 120 acres of land in Wyoming township and lived thereon until his death, Jan. 2, 1881.

Horace Wilder was born in Onondaga County, New York, in 1816, and came to Grandville in 1838. He had learned the business of a moulder in a foundry and worked at his trade after reaching Michigan, doing the first moulding on the Grand River. He and his only son both enlisted at Grand Rapids in Company C, First Regular Michigan Engineers and Mechanics, and served in the Army of the



Cumberland three years and three months. Mr. Wilder rose to the rank of corporal and the son to that of sergeant major.

James McCray came to Grandville in 1838 and settled in Grand Rapids about five years later. He was one of the early iron founders and machinists, a skilled workman, and for uprightness and integrity had the golden opinions of all who knew him. He died suddenly while sitting in his chair, in 1851.

Edward Feakins was born in Newnham, Parish of East Kent, England, in 1796. He came to the United States in 1830 and worked two years in the lumber woods of Pennsylvania, saving his earnings to buy land, which he did, in Grand Rapids, in 1834—120 acres at \$1.25 per acre, establishing his residence on Section 12, Wyoming township, now included within the limits of the city of Grand Rapids. He was thus one of the primal settlers in the county and assisted in raising the fourth building erected in Grand Rapids. Mr. Feakins had an extraordinary experience, even for a pioneer, struggling with disease and suffering from privations which his enfeebled health involved, for in those days a man needed all his powers of mind and body to aid him in securing even the common necessities of life; but he lived to see the results of some of his conflicts in the prosperity and fame of the Grand River Valley.

Grandville was one of the first settlements in Kent County and, for a number of years, one of the largest places. One of the first saw mills, if not the first (except one built on Indian Mill Creek for the Indians), was built at Grandville by Messrs. Ball & Wright, in 1834. This mill, after passing through various hands, was destroyed by fire. In 1834, Gideon H. Gordon built a saw-mill on Section 17. This mill afterward fell into other hands, and finally rotted down. In the same year Messrs. Britton & Brown also built a saw-mill on Section 21. It was afterward torn down. In 1835, a Mr. Fetterman commenced to build a saw-mill at the mouth of Rush Creek, just within the limits of Wyoming, and afterward sold it to George Ketchum, who completed it and also put in a run of mill stones for grinding grain. They were the first ever run in Kent County and were twenty or twenty-two inches in diameter. In the same year Gideon H. Gordon built a saw-mill on Section 27; it was afterward burned. Ketchum & McCray built the first furnace and machine shop on Grand River, at Grandville, in 1837. It was in this year that Horace Wilder, under the direction of Mr. McCray, melted and cast the first iron ever cast in Kent County. In 1837-8 George Ketchum built and put in operation the first flouring mill at Grandville. This mill was burned in 1843 and was never rebuilt. In 1838, the State authorities commenced to bore a salt well at the marsh on Section 3, about where the railroad bridge of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad now crosses Grand River. The work was under the charge of Dr. Douglas Houghton, State geologist. In this year a dwelling house, boarding house, blacksmith shop, and stables were erected, a dock built, tower erected, and curb sunk to the rock, and a steam engine set and made ready for the next year's operations. The next year the job of boring the well was let to Hon. Lucius Lyon, who bored to the depth of 700 feet, when the shaft broke and the drill, with a portion of the shaft, was left at the bottom of the well. The work was then abandoned and the buildings left to decay.



Many incidents of this early settlement have been handed down and a few have been taken from a previous publication. Justus C. Rogers, who came to Kent County in 1835, walked from Detroit to Chicago, and from there back to Grand Rapids. At that time the only public conveyance across Michigan was a lumber wagon stage, and walking was preferable to riding in it over the roads as they were then. Erastus and Eli Yeomans, pioneers of 1835, came from Pontiac on foot, via the Shiawassee trail, and had to ford all the streams. Dwight Rankin came with a wagon, in 1836, by way of Gull Prairie, and was nine days coming from Detroit to Grand Rapids. When they forded the Coldwater they got "set," and were an hour or two getting through. A pole boat, called the Cinderella, was launched at Grandville in June, 1837, and the occasion was made one of general rejoicing. All the people around were invited and the boat was poled up and down the river, while they had music and dancing on board.

Lewis Moody came to Grandville in the spring of 1837, but did not bring his family until November. They, with others, came by Green Lake and were six days getting through. They had four ox-teams and four wagons, and were frequently obliged to put the four teams on one wagon. Just at dark on the fourth day they came to the outlet of Green Lake and found the poles that composed the bridge afloat; they were about two hours getting across and it was raining all of the time. When they reached the Green Lake House they found some three or four others there before them, but none of them had had any supper. All they could muster towards it were some potatoes and onions that the people who kept the house had, and some venison that one of the travelers had. Mrs. Moody told them she could furnish bread, and they made out a supper that relished well, tired and hungry as they were. The next night for supper they had nothing but bread, and the same, in a very limited quantity, for breakfast. Mr. Moody was wont to say that the Fourth of July, 1837, was the "liveliest" Fourth he ever saw. The steamboat, "Governor Mason," made her trial trip from Grand Rapids to Grandville. Dr. Scranton was to deliver an address on board of the boat at Grandville, but, as it was very lengthy, when he was partly through some one blowed the whistle and the crowd cheered and broke up. There were four liberty poles raised at Grandville that day, but at night none of them were standing. It is said that when they first began to carry the United States mail from Grandville to Grand Haven, they used to tie it up in a pocket handkerchief. Leonard Stoneburner was the authority for the following story, which E. B. Bostwick told of one of the mail carriers, an Irishman. He started from Grandville late and did not get to the lumber camp, where he was to stay all night, until after dark. Just before he got through, Mr. Bostwick, who was but a short distance behind him, heard an owl cry out, "tu who-o, who-o," and the Irishman answered, "Me name is Jemmy O'Nale, sure, and I carry the mail."

Edmund B. Bostwick was a prominent man among the pioneers of Kent County. He fitted up with refined taste a suburban residence at the corner of Cherry street and College avenue and platted that part of the city known as Bostwick's Addition. He started for California in 1850, overland, perished on the way, and sleeps his last sleep under the shadow of the Rocky Mountains.



Ebenezer Davis was one of the early settlers of Kent County, having settled at Grand Rapids in 1836. He stated to a former writer that in the spring of 1837 there was a scarcity of flour, and for three weeks there was none to be had at Grand Rapids, and almost everybody lived on sturgeon. The first supply of flour came from Jackson, down Grand River, on a flat boat. At Grandville, in 1838, they had no flour, except some which was said to have been sunk in Lake Michigan. After knocking the hoops and staves off the flour retained the shape of the barrel and had to be cut to pieces with an axe and then pounded up. That summer was very sickly, and most of the time this was all that could be had for sick or well. The first Congregational Society was organized at Grandville, in 1838, and the Rev. James Ballard was the first pastor.

On April 3, 1848, the first township meeting of the township of Wyoming was held at the house of Dwight Rankin. Officers were elected as follows: William R. Godwin, supervisor; Joseph Blake, township clerk; Erastus Yeomans and Roswell Britton, justices of the peace; Nicholas Shoemaker, Dwight Rankin, and James B. Jewell, commissioners of highways; Luther D. Abbott and Justus C. Rogers, school inspectors; Chase Edgerly, treasurer; L. D. Abbott and J. C. Rogers, overseers of the poor; William Richardson, J. A. Britton, C. J. Rogers, and H. N. Roberts, constables.

Nicholas Shoemaker, who officiated as one of three first commissioners of highways of Wyoming township, was one of the brave, stout-hearted pioneers who came to Michigan in the early days, and by his energy, sound judgment, and decision of character, rendered valuable assistance in developing its resources, and in establishing its civil, social and religious institutions. He was a native of New York, and was born at German Flats, Herkimer County, in 1820. He was reared among the hills of his native State, and there breathed in the spirit of independence and freedom with which he was so largely endowed. His early life was passed in the village school and in assisting in the labors of the home farm, until he was nineteen years old. In 1839 he came to Grand Rapids, and here he worked as a farm laborer the ensuing seven years. In 1846 he purchased a tract of land on Sections 29 and 30 of what is now Wyoming township. In 1863 he entered the mercantile business at Grandville and remained so employed the remainder of his active career.

Mention has been made of the Rev. James Ballard as the first minister of the gospel to follow his calling in Grandville. There was no church edifice in the village until 1855, and it was in the parlors of the pioneer hotel that the reverend gentleman conducted his services. He was the first clergyman that officiated as such at Grandville, and he also preached at Grand Rapids and other parts of the county. He was the only located preacher in the western part of the county for several years. He officiated at most of the funerals and weddings in the early days of the settlement, and was always ready and willing to accommodate at all times. During several years after the close of the Civil War he labored as a teacher among the Freedmen of the Southern States.

It will be impossible, in the space allotted to this chapter, to give the history of Wyoming township in detail. It would require a volume to note every arrival and the careers of her worthy citizens. The



growth of the village of Grandville was somewhat retarded during the early years of its history by the hard times incident to and following the panic of 1837, which affected the country in general and the new settlements in particular. But it weathered the storm and added slowly to its population, and by 1887 it was deemed a place of enough importance to assume the dignity of a municipality, and it was accordingly incorporated. The religious and educational affairs of the village received early attention and liberal support. Merchants were aggressive and public spirited, their stocks often rivaling in value those exhibited by present-day dealers. The early settlers and business men of the township and village were generally people with agricultural tendencies and traditions. They purchased land, cultivated and improved it, erected dwelling houses, and lived out their allotted days in the peace and harmony of the quiet community their industry had established. The population of Grandville, in 1910, was 680, and it contains a number of handsome and expensive residences, while the average homes evince the air of thrift and prosperity in their surroundings, in keeping with the industry and frugality of the occupants. The Pere Marquette and Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railways pass through the village, and it is connected with Grand Rapids by an electric line. The manufacturing interests of the village are important and prosperous. A large amount of farm products are handled and shipped from that station, and all in all, Grandville is a commercial center of considerable importance. The village is well supplied with churches, and the public school system will compare with any village in Michigan. Further mention of the schools is given on another page of this volume, in the chapter devoted to Educational Development.

The following is a list of the supervisors of Wyoming township from its organization down to the present time: 1848, William R. Godwin; 1852, Nicholas Shoemaker; 1855, Egbert Dewey; 1856, Ebenezer Davis; 1857, Nicholas Shoemaker; 1858, Horatio N. Ball; 1860, Job Whitney; 1861, Ebenezer Davis; 1863, Job Whitney; 1864, Horace O. Webster; 1865, Dwight Rankin; 1866, Joseph Blake; 1867, Ebenezer Davis; 1868, Augustine Godwin; 1869, John T. Emmons; 1871, Augustine Godwin; 1872, Salisbury Mason; 1876, Clinton D. Shoemaker; 1878, William K. Emmons; 1879, William H. Nearpass; 1880, Augustine Godwin; 1885, Clinton D. Shoemaker; 1887, Nichol D. Emmons; 1896, Benjamin C. Porter; 1903, George Wykes; 1907, Nichol D. Emmons; 1913, Cornelius Huizenga, present incumbent.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ALGOMA TOWNSHIP

DATE OF ORGANIZATION—TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES—FIRST SETTLEMENT—SMITH LAPHAM—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING AND FIRST OFFICERS—SCHOOLS—VILLAGE OF ROCKFORD—BURCHVILLE—EDGERTON—LIST OF SUPERVISORS—HORATIO N. STINSON—WALTER CHIPMAN.

On March 15, 1849, the State Legislature provided for the organization of township 9 north, range 11 west, under the name of Algoma, and provided further that town 10 north, range 11 west (now the



township of Solon) should be attached to it. In 1857 Solon township was organized, thus reducing Algoma to its present convenient and usual size. The boundaries of the township are regular. The adjoining townships are Courtland on the east, Plainfield on the south, Sparta on the west, and Solon on the north.

The topographical features of the township are not striking, if to be so comprehends a great variety of natural scenery. The broad and fertile fields, rich and productive, are the principal sources of agricultural wealth. That this particular spot was chosen by some who were among the first settlers of the county, and who had the choice of a vast scope of country from which to select, is evidence sufficient of the productive character of the soil. The first settlers of the township were of the class of the heroic pioneers who were identified with the settlement of all this portion of Michigan. They were seeking homes on fertile soil, and hence the lands of the township of Algoma were very generally occupied by actual settlers at an early date in the history of Kent County.

The early history of the township is to a great extent identical with that of the village of Rockford, as most of the early settlers clustered about what is now the village. However, there were a few exceptions. The first settlement in the township was made in 1843. In that year Smith Lapham came with his family and located on the east side of Rouge River, in the southeast part of the township, where now stands the thriving village of Rockford, but in those early days called Laphamville.

Smith Lapham was born in Rhode Island, April 8, 1804. He was a distant relative of Senator Lapham, of New York, and a son of Job Lapham, who removed with his family to Saratoga, N. Y., in 1806. At the tender age of three years he lost his mother, and in 1816 he returned to Rhode Island and resided four years with his aunt, Lydia Sales, a widow. For some time after this he worked on a farm by the month. In 1825 he went to Buffalo, where he went aboard the "Pioneer" and sailed on Lake Erie. During her second trip the boat was overtaken by a severe storm and was wrecked off the shore at Fairport, Ohio. The passengers and crew were all rescued and Mr. Lapham and eight other men walked thence to Sandusky, Ohio, where they went aboard the only remaining steamer, "Superior," which was the second steamer built on the lake, and came to Detroit, where he and his associates separated. Mr. Lapham then proceeded on foot to travel over the counties of Wayne, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Monroe. He finally concluded to locate in Washtenaw County, and accordingly purchased a tract of land on Lodi Plains, in that county, six miles south of Ann Arbor. This was in the fall of 1825. He returned to Saratoga the same winter, and on April 10, following, married Miss Catharine Gilbert, returning with his wife to his land in Washtenaw County, in June of the same year. He sold his farm in 1835, and built the American House, which, at least until a few years ago, was still standing in Saline and being used as a hotel. But Mr. Lapham ran it as a hotel only about two years. In 1839 he became interested in the construction of the Wabash & Erie Canal, which was at that time building. His department was the building of culverts, and it is said that one which he erected is the



largest culvert on the canal. In 1843, in company with Luke Glibert, his brother-in-law, he came to Okemos, on the Okemos River, where they dug a canoe out of a bass-wood log and in this rude boat floated down the river to the mouth of Flat River, where the town of Lowell now stands. They left their canoe there and started through the woods, with no road, to visit another brother-in-law, David Gilbert, reaching the settlement late in the evening of the same day. Mr. Lapham came to the Rouge River and decided to locate there, although the land was not yet in market. He found a mill site where Rockford now stands, and the same year, in July, purchased eighty acres where Laphamville, or Rockford, was afterward built, and proceeded immediately to locate and erect a saw-mill. This mill was the first in the township and the dam was the first on Rouge River. Mr. Lapham finished the mill in 1844 and ran it successfully for twenty years. In 1866 he sold his mill and kept hotel in Rockford a couple of years. He was the first supervisor for Algoma, and held the same office a number of times afterward. In 1856 he was elected to the House of Representatives of the Michigan Legislature, and in 1858 was elected State Senator from this district. He held the office of justice of the peace almost constantly for over thirty-five years.

Mr. Lapham was soon followed by the Hunter brothers and others, in this corner of the township, but none went farther north or west until 1845, when Joshua Briggs and family, from Yates County, New York, went on the east line of Section 25. John Davis and family, from Ingham County, went a mile farther north on the east line of Section 24, and Henry Helsel and Henry Shank and families, from Ohio, went up the right bank of the river and settled on Section 21.

Henry Helsel was born in Washington County, Pennsylvania, July 27, 1818. His father, John Helsel, was also a native of Pennsylvania and removed to Trumbull County, Ohio, when Henry was but a small boy. He was brought up on a farm and worked very hard. His educational advantages were very limited, as his parents were poor. For a short time he attended a subscription school which was taught in a small log cabin containing a few slab benches. In 1845, when Algoma was as yet a wilderness, Mr. Helsel ventured among the Indians and wild animals and settled on Section 21, as previously stated. During the first year of his pioneer life he carried his provisions from Plainfield, a distance of seven miles. On one occasion, when returning from Plainfield in the evening, some animals, which he supposed were wolves, ran him up a tree, where he remained for three hours, until the moon rose, when the animals slunk away. He then descended and made his way home with quickened pace. On another occasion a panther followed Mrs. Helsel to the door of their cabin. Mr. Helsel began life in Algoma with five half-dollars as his cash capital. He located on his land in the fall, where no clearing was done. He cleared five acres, sowed it in wheat the next year, without plowing, and raised twenty-six bushels to the acre. He afterward raised forty-eight bushels of wheat to the acre in the same manner.

Benjamin Pettingill and his son, B. N. Pettingill, who came from Ingham County, settled in the southeast corner of the township in



1845. The Longs and Turners came in at an early day and settled in this vicinity. Among other pioneers in this township might be mentioned the names of Henry Morningstar and sons, John Boyer, John Jacobs, Jacob Ipe and sons, John M. Smith, James Smith, James Barnes, Andrew House, Daniel Youngblood, James Mosher, and Messrs. Emmons, Hull, Bowers, and Christy, all within the first ten years. Mr. Emmons was the first settler on the west line, north of the river. Mr. Morningstar and sons were the first to penetrate the forest and settle on the now thickly settled line, one and one-half miles east of and parallel with the west township line. They were soon followed by John Dome and Daniel Youngblood. They were then three and one-half miles from Mr. Helsel, who was their nearest neighbor. This is now one of the finest farming regions of the township.

At the first township meeting in the township of Algoma, held at a school house one mile south of the center in accordance with the Legislative enactment, April 2, 1849, the following persons were elected for township officers: William Thornton, township clerk; Smith Lapham, supervisor; Albert L. Pickett, treasurer; Morgan Allen, John H. Jacobs, and John Hamilton, justices of the peace.

Albert L. Pickett was born in Winchester, Chester County, New Hampshire, Nov. 24, 1820. He came to Kent County in 1842 and located on land south of Grand Rapids. In 1843 he moved to Algoma township, and in 1850 erected a saw-mill on Cedar Creek, on the northwest quarter of Section 22. He engaged in lumbering for the most part until 1861. He then enlisted in the Civil War and served in Company B, First Michigan light artillery, participating in the battles of Shiloh, Resaca, Cave City and others, but most of the time his command was kept guarding posts. He was promoted to the offices of sergeant and quartermaster, was commissioned second lieutenant on Dec. 2, 1863, and on March 14, 1864, was made first lieutenant. Mr. Pickett was railroad agent at Rockford for nine years, postmaster four years, township treasurer two years, and in 1880 he served as census enumerator.

The township of Algoma does not differ materially from other townships of the county in regard to early industries. The pioneer mills, churches, and schools had their existence, and with the exception of the last named have mostly passed away, with the increasing prominence of surrounding villages as marketing and trading points, coupled with their superior advantages in a religious and educational way. The principal grain crops are wheat, corn, and oats, for the production of which the soil is admirably adapted. Of these corn is the staple product, and this is largely fed to cattle and hogs, these being the source of a large income. Horses and sheep are also raised with profit on the rich grazing fields afforded on the productive farms, and which are not used at the time for the cultivation of crops.

There are nine district schools in the township of Algoma, exclusive of the village schools, but one of them—District No. 13—is a fractional district. With a carefully arranged course of study, these schools give persistent students the advantages of a good common school education, and fit their graduates for the ordinary business of life.



Rockford is a flourishing village of 843 inhabitants, according to the United States census of 1910 and is larger now. It is situated on the Rouge River, five miles from its mouth, and thirteen miles from Grand Rapids, on the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad. It is in the extreme southeast corner of Algoma, on Section 36, and includes a considerable portion of Section 1, of the township of Plainfield. The first settler here was, as before stated, Smith Lapham. He came in the year 1843, constructed a dam across the river, and erected the building afterward used by Messmore & Watkins as a shingle mill. A mill on the west side of the stream was erected the following year by Hunter Brothers. In the year 1845 a postoffice was established here, with Smith Lapham as the first postmaster, the mail being carried by him from Plainfield, once a week, in his pockets, for want of a mail bag. In the year 1848, White & Rathbun, of Grand Rapids, opened the first stock of store goods sold here. A grist mill was erected by Chase & Judson, in 1852, containing three run of stone. The village was first platted in 1856, under the name of Laphamville, replatted in 1865, when the name was changed to Rockford. It was regularly incorporated by the State Legislature in 1871. It has a resident veterinary surgeon, three produce stores, a hotel, two harness shops, a shoe store, two drug stores, a general store, two meat markets, two hardware stores, a wagon-making shop, a shoe factory, two cigar stores and billiard halls, one jewelry store, a laundry, a furniture store, two groceries, three garages, a dentist, a millinery store, a feed store, a grist mill, a tailor, two resident physicians, one gents' furnishings store, a dry goods store, an undertaker, and a tannery. The village has electric light, water works, Baptist, Congregational, Episcopal, and Methodist Episcopal Churches, a bank and a weekly newspaper, the Rockford "Register."

Burchville, now deserted but once a promising village, was situated near the center of Section 1, in the northeast corner of the township. It was a thriving "lumber station" in its day. It was platted in 1868, by John S. Weller, of Ann Arbor, who named it in honor of his partner, Jefferson Burch, who came here and built the first steam saw-mill, in 1866. That mill was totally destroyed by fire, in 1867, and a new one was erected by Mr. Burch on the same site. It had a capacity for cutting 15,000 feet of lumber and 15,000 shingles per day, but it ceased operations with the exhaustion of the timber. In 1867, George R. Congdon & Company erected a mill of about the same capacity, and that was destroyed by fire in June, 1870, with about \$100,000 worth of lumber. Newton & Company also had a small, portable steam mill near by, and it cut 10,000 feet of lumber per day. Campbell & Stanton had a portable steam shingle mill, which began operations in October, 1868, about one hundred rods west of the railroad, and this mill cut 15,000 shingles per day. At the height of its industrial fame Burchville had a population of probably 200, but with the removal of the mills the population scattered and the village ceased to exist.

Edgerton is the name of a little hamlet on the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad, about three miles north of Rockford. This place boasts a postoffice, a Methodist Episcopal Church, a general store, two flour mills, a produce store, and a resident veterinary surgeon. It has a population of about 150.



The following is a list of the supervisors of Algoma township from its organization down to the present time: 1849, Smith Lapham; 1853, James Mosher; 1854, Smith Lapham; 1855, George H. White; 1856, Morgan Allen; 1857, Smith Lapham; 1858, James Mosher; 1859, William Thornton; 1861, Morgan Allen; 1865, Horatio N. Stinson; 1867, Walter Chipman; 1868, Horatio N. Stinson; 1877, Neal McMillan; 1878, Oscar House; 1879, John T. Gould; 1881, Nathan Gould; 1882, John T. Gould; 1893, Hugh A. Montgomery; 1907, Arthur D. Smith; 1910, David Munro; 1915, Earl S. Perry, present incumbent.

Horatio N. Stinson was born in Georgetown, Lincoln County, Maine, Oct. 19, 1820. He was reared on a farm and educated at Freedom Academy. When quite young he went several trips to sea with relatives, who were seamen. He came to Plainfield, Kent County, in 1841, and followed lumbering the succeeding winter, in Algoma township, for Haines Gordon; and for the following eight summers he sawed lumber for Mr. Gordon and others, and taught school in the winter. In 1849 he purchased a farm in Courtland township and engaged in farming there until 1853. He then went to California, driving an ox team and walking all the way from Leavenworth, Kan., through to the Golden State. He there engaged in mining for six years and, in 1859, returned to Michigan, but went to Southwest Missouri the same fall, locating in Dade County, at Greenfield, where he engaged in the hardware trade with a former California associate. At the breaking out of the Civil War he was obliged to leave Greenfield, for he was known to be a Union man, and such characters were not harbored in that region; but soon afterward he returned to sell his property. He was there taken prisoner by the Confederates, kept three days and then released. Soon afterward they learned that Mr. Stinson had made cartridges for the Union army and they resolved to punish him with death. They placed a guard about the house in which he was stopping, and intended to hang him to a tree the following morning; but a little after midnight the guard at the door fell asleep and Mr. Stinson made good his escape. On Nov. 1 he reached General Lane's brigade which was on its way to join Fremont at Springfield, Mo., and he immediately enlisted in Company D, Sixth Missouri cavalry. While in the service he participated in the battles of Chickasaw Bayou, Pea Ridge, Siege of Vicksburg, Arkansas Post, and others. He took sick at Vicksburg and resigned his commission, which was that of first lieutenant regimental quartermaster. He returned to Michigan in 1864, and removed to Rockford, where he lived in the old Algoma House six weeks, when it was destroyed by fire. He rebuilt it and conducted it as a hotel for about twelve years. He held many offices of trust—supervisor, twelve years; assessor, six years, and school director, twelve years.

Walter Chipman settled on Section 2 in Algoma township, in 1854. He was born in Rensselaer County, New York, Aug. 7, 1820. He graduated with high honors at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., in 1839. He read law in Troy and Lansingburg, and was admitted to the bar in 1842. He practiced until 1846 and then entered the war against Mexico, in Company A, First New York regiment. He was discharged at Monterey, Cal., in 1848. He was in San Fran-



cisco when there were but twelve buildings in the entire place, and while there he helped frame the constitution of California. In 1851 he went to South America, Cork, London, and Havre, and back to New York in 1852. In 1854 he came to Algoma township and followed lumbering for several years, and made a farm in the woods.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### BOWNE TOWNSHIP

ACT OF THE LEGISLATURE—BOUNDARIES—SURFACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES—FIRST LAND PURCHASED—JONATHAN THOMAS—FIRST TOWNSHIP ELECTION AND OFFICERS—EARLY CONDITIONS—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

The Michigan State Legislature, on March 15, 1849, created the township of Bowne by the following official enactment: "That township number five north of range number nine west, in the county of Kent, be, and the same is hereby set off from the township of Caledonia, and organized into a separate township by the name of Bowne, and the first township meeting therein shall be held at the school house in district number one in said township." The township of Lowell joins Bowne on the north, the eastern boundary meets Ionia county, the southern boundary is the line that separates Kent and Barry Counties, and the township of Caledonia is on the west.

The surface of the township of Bowne is, part of it, somewhat broken and hilly. It is rolling in the south part, the western part was originally mostly timbered openings, while the eastern part is beech and maple land, and is rather level. The drainage of the township is principally toward the south. The territory is well watered, the principal stream being Coldwater River, which flows from east to west through the southern part of the township, and its tributaries, of which there are several. These streams are all fed by many spring branches, thus affording good water power for the early mills which were established along their banks. Natural conditions in the township were favorable in early days to the existence of all kinds of game, ferocious animals, and occasional venomous reptiles. These were found there in great numbers by the white settlers, and Bowne was a favorite hunting ground for the Indians at a still earlier date. The soil of the township varies from a rich dark loam to a mixture of sand and clay, the former being highly valuable for the raising of all kinds of cereals, corn, oats, and barley, especially, and all the land of the township is made to yield profitable returns to the owners. Stock raising and fruit culture are among the principal industries, and these afford good margins of profit.

The people are, as a class, industrious and hospitable, and possess some of the best farms in the county. The first land purchased of the government was by Jonathan Thomas, who left the town of Ovid, N. Y., in 1836, entered a large tract of land in the southwestern part of Bowne township, and, in 1837, came on to improve it, bringing with him Frederick Thomson and family, Israel Graves and fam-

ily, and William Wooley and family. They came by water to Toledo and thence to their destination with ox teams, making the trip from Toledo in about two weeks. They proceeded to build houses and clear up the farm afterwards owned by A. D. Thomas. The first house was of logs, about twelve by fourteen feet square, without any chamber, and with only one door and one window and a "shake" roof. Near this Mr. Thomas built two other houses and a small log building for an office for himself. Mr. Thomas was taken ill soon after he arrived, and was ill most of the time until the next winter, when his son-in-law, John Harris, came and they fixed a bed in a sleigh and he started for his home in New York. They made the whole distance with a sleigh, dragging through Northern Ohio in the slush and mud. During the first summer, when they got out of provisions, Mr. Thomas, although quite ill at the time, had his bed fixed in a wagon, and taking his whip, started his ox team for Kalamazoo. He was obliged to go a few miles beyond there and buy wheat, bring it back to Kalamazoo and have it ground. There were a great many Indians on the Coldwater when these people moved there. They were found to be good neighbors when they were sober, but when they could get "fire water" they were quarrelsome and occasioned trouble at times. One came to the Thomson home one day when Mr. Thomson was away and sat down in the rocking chair before the fire and rocked himself over into the fireplace. Mrs. Thomson pulled him out of the fire and he became enraged and attempted to stab her, but when she picked up an axe and told him she would kill him if he did not leave, he beat a retreat. Another time, a number of Indians came up on their ponies, when the men were gone, and ordered Mrs. Wooley to get them something to eat. She ran to her door and called to Mrs. Thomson, who went over, as brave as could be, and talked to them. The old chief ordered her to go back to her wigwam and get him something to eat. She obeyed, trembling with fear all the time, and prepared the best dinner she could under the circumstances, setting the table with the nicest spread and dishes she had. The chief ate his meal alone at her house and seemed much pleased. He told her she was a "brave squaw," and that they would not harm them then, but after a certain number of moons they were going to kill all of the whites in the country. The other families that came with them soon became discouraged and went back, and the Thomsons were left alone, seven miles at first from any white neighbors. On one occasion Mrs. Thomson remained alone eight days. Mr. Thomson went to Kalamazoo to mill, while there his oxen strayed away, and before he could find them and get home, eight days passed by. Mrs. Thomson remained at home until nearly noon the last day, when the suspense becoming so great she could bear it no longer, she started on foot for the nearest neighbors, seven miles distant. After proceeding about half way she met a white man. He was very much surprised at meeting a woman under such circumstances and inquired of her where she was going. She told him, and inquired if he had seen or heard of her husband. He told her of her husband losing his cattle, that he was on the road and would be along before night, and as it was very warm he advised her either to go back or wait until her husband came. When she told him no, she



would never stop until she had seen her husband, he said that he was a bachelor, but if he could find a woman who would endure as much and as bravely for him he should certainly marry. They used to see many wolves and bears, but never felt much fear of them. For some years they went to "Scale's Prairie" to attend meeting, and afterward, when there was population enough so that preachers came among them, the Thomsons frequently entertained three or four at a time in their little log shanty, 12x14 square. In the spring of 1838, Messrs. Malcolm and John McNaughton commenced "breaking" on Section 20. They broke up forty acres that year and put it into wheat. In the fall of 1838, Roswell Tyler, Norman Foster, and J. G. Beach settled at the center of the township. They came from Detroit with teams, via Gull Prairie, and were about ten days on the road. Mr. Tyler and another man came through from Jackson on foot, following what was called the Clinton Trail. At this time there were no settlements nearer on the north than Ada and Lowell. Among the other early settlers whose names have been preserved, we find James H. Truax, Jared Miller, William Stewart, Daniel C. McVean, Abraham Lowe, and Messrs. White and Cobb, who settled at different times, ranging from 1840 to 1845.

The first township election was held April 2, 1849, and of all the settlers then in Bowne, fourteen received township offices. With the exception of Peter White, Abraham Lowe, William Stewart, John Cobb, William Wooley, Israel Graves, Frederick Thomson, and Jonathan Thomas, all of the early settlers were candidates for one or another of the various offices which the township offered. The successful ones were as follows: Supervisor, Roswell F. Tyler; clerk, Daniel C. McVean; treasurer, Justus G. Beach; justices of the peace, Jared Miller and Norman Foster; assessors, Abijah Poole and John M. Campbell; commissioners of highways, Loren B. Tyler, James H. Truax and Asa R. Tyler; school inspectors, Jared Miller and William Gibson; overseers of the poor, Roswell F. Tyler and John Underwood; constables, Salmon E. Platt and Henry C. Foster.

The early settlers of Bowne had many things to contend with. It was said that the land was too low or the water was too high, and there was no way to get the surplus off. The land was heavily timbered and it took much labor to fit a small piece for cultivation. When the crops commenced to mature, wild animals and birds were early on hand to gather their share. Small clearings were made, but, being surrounded by dense timber, very little air was moving, and the sun beat down on them with intense heat. The roads through the woods seemed to have no bottom, and long pieces had to be covered with logs, rails, and brush, in order to make them passable. The streams had to be forded, and the settlers went to mill, to church, and to visit each other, with ox teams and lumber wagons.

They did not listen to the sweet sounds of the organ or piano, but to the howls of the wolf, which could, it appeared to the listener, multiply himself until one would appear to be ten, and ten one hundred; also, to the hoot of the owl, that flew so noiselessly that in the night one would not be aware of his presence till the hoot broke with startling effect near by, warning the listener that if a chicken could be reached it would be missing in the morning. But through the in-



domitable courage and persevering efforts of the early pioneers, this has all been changed; the woods have disappeared, the roads have become smooth and pleasant to travel. The wild animals and destructive birds have also disappeared, the log cabin is gone, and fine farm dwellings and large and productive orchards and small fruits of all kinds have taken their place; but the pioneers have removed to that house not made with hands.

The following is a list of the supervisors of Bowne township from the time of its organization down to the present: 1849, Roswell F. Tyler; 1853, A. C. Hill; 1854, Daniel C. McVean; 1857, James H. Truax; 1859, Luke Strickland; 1862, Jared Miller; 1863, Luke Strickland; 1865, James H. Truax; 1868, Abner D. Thomas; 1871, A. Lewis Coons; 1873, Abner D. Thomas; 1875, W. T. Remington; 1876, A. Lewis Coons; 1877, Abner D. Thomas; 1880, David M. Skidmore; 1881, James C. Johnson; 1886, Martin A. Holcomb; 1887, Peter J. Sinclair; 1889, William E. Davis; 1890, Peter J. Sinclair; 1892, Benjamin J. Lee; 1893, Frank L. Colson; 1895, William E. Davis; 1902, Levi G. Skidmore; 1904, William E. Davis; 1905, Peter J. Sinclair; 1915, Henry A. Johnson, present incumbent.

W. T. Remington was born in Dutchess County, New York, Aug. 16, 1835. He was liberally educated in the public schools of Hudson, N. Y., where he acted as monitor through the grades. His first enterprise in business was as clerk in a drug store, and afterward in a general assortment store. He next entered the employ of Stone & Pomeroy and assisted in the preparation of a map of Philadelphia and vicinity. He came to Wayne County, Michigan, and engaged in clerking for a time, and was then associated with L. C. Bailey, his father-in-law, in a saw-mill, which interest continued until Mr. Bailey gave place to another son-in-law. In 1869 Mr. Remington sold out and interested himself in agricultural pursuits. He served as supervisor of Bowne township and was actively interested in raising troops for the Civil War.

David M. Skidmore was born May 1, 1828, in Livingston County, New York, and with his parents came to Kent County in 1846. For a time he was postmaster at Alto, and he held the positions of drain commissioner, highway commissioner, school inspector, supervisor, etc., in the township, and he was the owner of 360 acres of good land. He enlisted in November, 1863, in the First Michigan Engineers and Mechanics, and went out as second lieutenant, being later promoted to first lieutenant, and he was with Sherman in his memorable march to the sea.

James C. Johnson was born in Erie County, Pennsylvania, Jan. 2, 1840. He was reared on his father's farm and received a common school education. He located in Bowne township by accident. He had been prospecting through Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota, and when near Lowell on his homeward route remembered a friend in the vicinity and, procuring a lay-over ticket, left the train, and after a brief search found his friend in Bowne. The country pleased him and he located land in the year 1861. Soon afterward he yielded to a conviction of duty and enlisted in the cause of his country. He was enrolled in Company M, Ninth New York cavalry. He served but a short time and was mustered out on a general order from the war de-



partment. He returned to Michigan and, in the fall of 1862, enlisted in Company M, Sixth Michigan cavalry, as buglar. He was in the famous battle of Fredericksburg, but soon afterward was taken ill and became an inmate of the hospital, from whence he was discharged from the service for disability and returned home, but was unable to resume business on his farm for a year. He was zealous in working for the prosperity of the community to which he belonged, and was active in the erection of a church at Bowne Center, and in the establishment of a daily mail. He was postmaster at Bowne Center sixteen years and filled many other public positions in his township with credit to himself and satisfaction to his fellow-citizens.

Martin A. Holcomb was born in Paris, Portage County, Ohio, Jan. 27, 1826. At the age of eighteen he began to work at wagon and carriage making, which he continued until 1850, when he went to California to make a swifter fortune in its gold fields. He operated chiefly in Calaveras County, mining and plying his trade. In 1854 he returned home, and the same year bought 160 acres of land in Bowne township. He enlisted in his country's service, in Company I, Twenty-sixth Michigan infantry, and was wounded at Spottsylvania, after which he was not in active service. He was discharged in 1865. Aside from being supervisor, he held the position of township treasurer two terms, commissioner of highways, and served as census enumerator in 1880.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### OAKFIELD TOWNSHIP

BOUNDARIES—FIRST SETTLEMENT—FIRST TOWN MEETING—EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS—PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY—LAKES—EARLY MILLS—FIRST OFFICERS—A BEAR STORY—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

Oakfield, formerly a part of Courtland township, lies twenty-one miles northeast of Grand Rapids, having Spencer township on the north, Montcalm County on the east, Grattan township on the south, and Courtland township on the west. The first settlement was made within its territory, June 5, 1838, by William R. Davis, who located on Section 19. There seems to have been no one, save himself and family, to break the solitude of the wilderness until June, 1839, when Isaac Tower, Stephen S. Tower, and William Thornton, who afterward became sheriff of Kent County, with their families moved in and became comparatively near neighbors to the hitherto lonely pioneers, Stephen S. Tower and Mr. Thornton locating on Section 29 and Isaac Tower on Section 30. There were no more settlements until April, 1842, when Thomas Crinnion located on Section 18, and David J. Gilbert on Section 19, in September of the same year. In 1844 Sheldon Ashley selected a beautiful home on Section 36, and in 1845, three brothers—Harry, Giles, and Eric McArthur—located respectively on Sections 33, 32 and 34.

Giles McArthur was born in Portage County, Ohio, Jan. 26, 1821, and lived there until thirteen years old; then in Cuyahoga County until nineteen. He remained with his parents until of age, and on

Feb. 5, 1844, married Miss Harriet E. Newcomb. He then came to Michigan with his brother, Eric, and first bought forty acres of land in what is now Oakfield township, at sixty-seven cents per acre. Giles then returned to Ohio for his bride, whom he brought to the wilderness. Their first house was a neat log cabin, one of the best in the township; they improved their land, resided on it four years, then sold and bought 120 acres in Section 32, and their first house there was also a log cabin. The implements used on the farm were rude, of schools and churches there were none, but still their pioneer life was happy.

Morris Hart on Section 8, Nathaniel W. Mack on Section 12, John Davis on Section 32, Levi White on Section 21, James Elsbey on Section 31, William Peterson on Section 20, and Benjamin Potter on Section 21, may be mentioned as among the settlers of 1846 and 1847.

William Peterson was born in Saratoga County, New York, in 1808, and came to Michigan in 1834. He was a cooper by trade, but in 1846 settled in Oakfield township, where he located 160 acres of State land and became a farmer. His first habitation here was a log cabin, with a stick and mud chimney, the smoke from which was a curiosity to the red men who in that day yet roamed the woods, frequently stopping at Mr. Peterson's cabin for a meal, or to barter their game—such as deer and bear—for such articles of food as flour or bacon. In this township Mr. Peterson passed the remainder of his life, dying an honored and respected citizen, Aug. 6, 1888.

At one time this township was organized under the name of Wabasis, but by a subdivision of the territory it was again incorporated with Courtland, and finally was permanently organized under the name of Oakfield, through the influence of Sheldon Ashley, in March, 1849. Its first town meeting was held the first Monday of April, 1849, at a little log school house in District No. 1, on Section 29. This was the first school house in the township, but the log cabin was replaced in 1852 by a frame structure, 36x26 feet in size. This was the famous District No. 1 that, so it is claimed, educated and sent forth more and better teachers in the early days than any other district school in the county. It was known as the White Swan School. Oakfield now has seven district school houses, two of which are in fractional districts. The educational interests of the township are, and always have been of paramount importance in the minds of the people. The first school in the township was organized with but six pupils—all the children then in the township—and was kept in a private house, with Miss Sarah Davis, who afterward became Mrs. Almon Thompson, of Courtland township, as teacher. When a school house was finally erected, Harry McArthur was installed as teacher, and to his earnest labors many, not only in Oakfield, but in adjacent townships, owed much of their advancement in knowledge.

The physical geography of this township presents us with a rolling surface, quite frequently broken with lakes and ponds, with a soil much too sandy in the northern part, but a rich clay loam in the more southern portions, peculiarly adapting it to wheat culture, wool growing, and dairying, besides the ordinary production of corn, oats, potatoes, and buckwheat. Of wheat, large quantities of excellent



quality annually find their way from this township to the markets east and west; and as to wool, Oakfield has some of the best flocks and carries some of the finest clips to market of any township in the county. The dairy is receiving more and more attention and it pays exceedingly well, where care and capital are expended. Horticulture has received a share of attention and the returns in apples, pears, peaches, grapes, cherries, currants and strawberries show that Oakfield, in fruit raising, may become a peer of any of her successful sister townships. The timber was originally mainly oak, but, scattered over the township, there were some fine groves of pine which were rapidly decimated by the lumberman's axe and saw.

On Sections 1 and 2 was early discovered a very fine bed of marl lime, so pure as to be cut from the bed in squares, dried and placed immediately in the kiln for burning. To facilitate the mining of this bed, a chain of lakes on Sections 1 and 11 were drained. Their natural outlet was through Stack's Lake, which emptied into Black Creek; but, by dint of engineering, an outlet was effected into Wabasis Creek, from the head of the Horseshoe—a large lake on Section 2—which was thus rendered nearly dry. Besides those already mentioned, there are several small lakes that demand but a passing notice. Of such is Scram's Lake, and Addis' Lake closely connected with it, lying on Sections 17, 18, and 19; the Zeigenfuss Lake on Sections 11 and 14—the outlet from which forms the north branch of Wabasis Creek; and also a number of little lakes on Sections 33 and 34, the principal of which is Flat Iron Lake. But Long Lake, about one-half mile long and one-eighth wide, situated on Section 34, cannot be thus lightly passed by, for on its frozen surface, in March, 1843, occurred the first death among the whites of this township. Orin Gilbert, brother of Rev. David J. Gilbert, in endeavoring to reach his brother's house from Cook's Corners, was overcome by fatigue and cold and perished on this lake. Soon afterward, Tahanah, an Indian, in passing on the trail, discovered him lying on the snow. The wily Indian did not approach him, but, after circling several times around the prostrate form to make sure that he was dead, sped away to convey the sad intelligence to his friends. Ever after, the Indians called this "Dead Man's Lake."

Wabasis is much the largest lake in the township, or even in the county, being two miles long. It is very irregular in shape, but it is said to average nearly one mile in width. It has excellent fishing grounds, and at certain seasons of the year—though they are caught at no other time, and even then are only found in particular places—whitefish are caught in considerable quantities. How they come there no one can tell, and where they disappear to is equally a mystery. The Wabasis abounds with pickerel. The lake projects into Sections 29, 33, and 34, but lies mainly on Sections 27 and 28. It was named in honor of the Indian chief, Wab-ah-see (White Swan), who fell under the displeasure of his people for selling their lands, and also, as they supposed, for secreting and retaining the gold received for the purchase. To obtain this, they deferred his death and banished him to the shores of this beautiful and romantic lake. By some the gold was supposed to be hidden on its shores, and many have sought for it by torchlight and by sunlight, but with equal lack of success. Fail-



ing to extort money, and maddened by the loss of their hunting grounds, the big chief, Ne-ogg-ah-nah, with almost fiendish subtlety, induced Wab-ah-see to go beyond his limits and, in a drunken frolic, killed him with a firebrand. His broken skull is said to have been sent to a museum in Connecticut by a Mr. Hall, of Plainfield.

The first saw-mill in the township was built by John Davis, about the year 1846 or 1847. It was located on Beaver Dam Creek, a small stream running into Wabasis Lake. Three times it was swept into ruins by the freshets, and as often repaired or rebuilt by the indomitable perseverance of its owner. But at last, patience and capital alike gave out and a steam mill was erected in its stead. That was long since dismantled, and desolation reigns where sterling enterprise once presided.

The Lillie steam shingle mill was built in 1861, on Section 3. It was burned April 17, 1868, and was rebuilt in the same year. The Addis shingle and cider mills were located on the northwest quarter of Section 20, and were built in 1869, with John Addis as proprietor. The Oakfield shingle mill was located on Wabasis Creek, on Section 15, near the Oakfield grist mills, which were established in 1864. This creek, which is the outlet of Wabasis Lake, here becomes quite a stream, emptying into Flat River in Montcalm County. Near this mill a little village, consisting of a store or two, a blacksmith shop, and half a dozen dwellings, sprang up and for a number of years was the only business center in the township. A postoffice was established there in 1874 and was given the name of Oakfield Center, although the place is quite commonly known as "Podunk." The postoffice has been discontinued and rural mail delivery is now had from Greenville. Its industries at the present time are confined to a flour mill and a general store. With the building of the Grand Trunk Railroad through the northern part of the township, a station was established on Section 6, and it has achieved some distinction as a trading center. The name of the place is Harvard, it has a postoffice, a hardware store, billiard hall, a resident physician, a warehouse, and a general store, besides a few other industries, and its population is about 70. A postoffice has also been established on Section 3, with the name of Lincoln Lake, on the line of the Grand Trunk Railway, and it contains a general store.

At the time of the organization of the township the following officers were elected: Thomas Spencer, supervisor; Harry McArthur, township clerk; Harry Osgood, treasurer; Thomas Spencer, Harvey D. Pond, David J. Gilbert, and William M. Gould, justices of the peace; Nathan H. Gould, Giles McArthur, William Chapman, and Jesse Stewart, constables; Benjamin Morey, William Peterson, and Cyrus B. Thomas, commissioners of highways; John Davis and Lafayette Knight, school inspectors; Sheldon Ashley and Harry Osgood, overseers of the poor.

Three brothers—Joel, Jesse, and David Stewart—were among the earliest settlers of Oakfield township, and they lived in the first frame house erected within its borders. Their mother was the first white woman to die in the township. The first marriage in the township was solemnized by Rev. James Ballard, Aug. 2, 1840. The bride was Miss Hannah Tower, daughter of Isaac Tower, and the bride-



groom was Zenas G. Winsor, of Grand Rapids. The first birth among the whites was William H. H., son of William R. and Electa M. Davis, the date being April 24, 1840. Among other first things occurring in the township was the first bear killed by John Davis and his brother, William R. Davis, afterward a member of the Michigan State Legislature. Returning late one afternoon, in the summer of 1842, from mowing on a marsh on Crinnion Creek in the north part of the township, William riding a horse and carrying some game he had caught, and John on foot and equipped with a fine rifle and closely followed by a faithful dog, were surprised and delighted when within two miles of home by the discovery of a huge black bear. The dog gave instant pursuit, closely followed by the brothers. Frightened by the barking of the dog, the bear was soon treed. The brothers were quickly upon the spot, and William anticipated that bruin would be a speedy victim of his brother's unerring aim. But what was their chagrin, on examining the rifle, to find that in the hurry of the pursuit their last cap had been lost from the gun. Here was a dilemma; but necessity is said to be the mother of invention and she did not belie her character in this case. The only expedient was to send William one and one-half miles to Mr. Crinnion's, the nearest house, for caps, if they could be found, otherwise for fire, while John and the dog kept watch by the bear. Mounting "Old Dutch," his horse, and furiously flourishing his whip, William was soon lost to sight, and he returned in a very short time with a burning brand from Mrs. Crinnion's fireplace. He found bruin in another tree, a few rods from where he had left him, and John and the dog were still watching. It was already dark and haste was necessary. Powder was poured into the tube of the gun and John, a splendid marksman, took aim, while William stood by with a live coal, ready to apply at the word fire. This soon came, the sharp crack of the rifle rang through the forest depths, and the bear lay dead at the foot of the tree.

David J. Gilbert built the second frame barn and dwelling in the township, Isaac Tower having built a frame barn in 1840 and William Thornton a frame house in 1841. In the early days, when oftentimes the woodman's axe was his only saw-mill, and the forest his only lumber yard, usually his house was made of rough logs rolled one above another. The floor was also of logs and the roof of pieces of the same, called "shakes." The fireplace was composed of sticks and clay and the fire was fed with huge logs rolled to their place with a hand-spike. The doors were rude oaken planks, split from the heart of some huge forest giant, and as for windows, some houses had very small holes in their sides which passed by that name, and some had none. The only means of transportation, either for business or pleasure, was the lumber wagon or sled, drawn by the patient ox, whose rate of speed might be three miles an hour in good going. Many a party of pleasure, clad in homespun and home-made garments, and seated on the straw in the bottom of the wagon or sled, as the case might be, has been borne thus slowly over the devious roads leading from one cabin to another, and they found ample time to enjoy themselves by the way, sure of a hearty welcome at the end of their ride. Now, the log cabin is an institution of the past, and the hardships of frontier life only a matter of memory.

Following is a list of the supervisors of Oakfield township from the year of its organization down to the present time: 1849, Thomas Spencer; 1850, Harry McArthur; 1854, Thomas Spencer; 1855, Harry McArthur; 1858, Richard L. Wells; 1860, John Davis; 1861, William R. Davis; 1865, Rufin Caukin; 1866, William R. Davis; 1875, Harry McArthur; 1877, William Brown; 1878, William R. Davis; 1879, William Brown; 1880, Neil Stewart; 1883, H. E. Rowley; 1884, H. A. Rowley; 1885, Nelson B. Rich; 1887, Neil Stewart; 1888, Edward H. Jones; 1891, Myron A. Potter; 1892, Myron A. Potter and Edward H. Jones; 1893, Edward H. Jones; 1896, W. B. Bowman; 1900, Edward H. Jones; 1902, John E. Peterson; 1903, Edward H. Jones; 1907, Lewis E. McArthur; 1909, Charles H. Potter; 1911, Delaskie Snyder; 1914, Seth Partridge; 1915, William A. Peterson, present incumbent.

Edward H. Jones was born in the Wolverine State, April 12, 1847, and was a lad of only two years when he became a resident of Oakfield township. His educational advantages were those afforded by the common schools, which at that time were very meager. He remained with his parents until his majority, with the exception of his service in the army. He enlisted in September, 1864, in Company B, Third Michigan infantry, at Grand Rapids, under Captain Seth M. Moon, Col. Moses B. Houghton, and Lieut.-Col. John Atkinson. He was mustered out at Victoria, Tex., May 25, 1866, and was honorably discharged at Detroit, June 15, of the same year. A miller by trade, he became the proprietor of the Oakfield flour and grist mill, at Oakfield Center, and this he operated successfully during the remainder of his active career. The mill is now being operated by his son, Thomas D. Jones. Mr. Jones was township clerk for thirteen years and supervisor for three consecutive years from 1888. Upon the resignation of his uncle, Myron A. Potter, in 1892, he was appointed to the same position, and elected in 1893, '94 and '95. He was again elected in 1900, 1901, 1903, 1904, 1905, and 1906, indicating the well merited respect and esteem of his constituents. He was justice of the peace for six years, and was officially connected with the public schools of Oakfield for the long period of twenty-three years. He and his wife were prominent in the erection of the Union Chapel, where Sunday School and preaching by any denomination is held.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### NELSON TOWNSHIP

DESCRIPTION—SURFACE AND DRAINAGE—EARLY SETTLEMENT—NICHOLAS R. HILL—EXPERIENCES OF SETTLERS—CEDAR SPRINGS—SAND LAKE—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

The township of Nelson was organized as a township by the Board of Supervisors, Oct. 14, 1854. The territory which it constitutes was described as follows in the act of the Board: "All that part of the county of Kent designated in the United States survey as township number ten north, of range number ten west."

The surface of the township of Nelson is rolling, and the drainage is to Black Creek, in the northern part, and to Little Cedar and Big



Cedar Creeks in the western parts of the township. Pine timber predominated in this township, and in the northeast corner there were many large cedar and tamarack swamps. But the soil, although in many places rather light, as the presence of pine denotes, is still very productive, where, as is generally the case, beech, maple and other hardwood trees are mixed with the pine. In fact the soil of the entire township produces good crops of wheat, oats, corn, rye, barley, clover, timothy and potatoes. In the early days wheat was the principal money producing grain, and it was marketed at the villages of Cedar Springs and Sand Lake, but later stock raising received more attention. Wheat growing becoming less advantageous for several reasons, the acreage grew less and corn came to yield more abundantly. More attention was then given to stock raising, and dairying has been found to be an encouraging source of farm profits. The villages of Cedar Springs and Sand Lake have been for many years centers of activities.

The early settlers of Nelson township generally possessed money sufficient to purchase a yoke of oxen and a cow, a few hens and pigs, and some farm implements. Those who were unable to purchase a full outfit borrowed from neighbors, who willingly loaned. In every instance grain was planted, the sower scattering by hand. The harvests of grain were gathered with a hand cradle, the wild grass was mown with a scythe, and a grindstone, axe, plow, and fork completed the utensils for early farming. They were a people well adapted to endure the privations necessary to improve a new country. They were generally of small means, with a limited education, and all strong in the faith of the religion of their ancestors. That their triumph over difficulties was well established, behold the large holdings of their descendants, who now are the possessors of well stocked farms.

The township of Nelson was settled nearly as early as any of the townships in the northern part of Kent County, and the first purchase of land in the township is said to have been made by Miles B. Dean, June 24, 1850. To William H. Bailey is ascribed the honor of having been the first actual settler, in 1851, followed soon thereafter by John S. Jones, John M. Towns, Josiah Towns, N. R. Hill, D. B. Stout, H. M. Stanton, George Stout, Andrew Stout, Riley Smith, Samuel Punches, Joseph M. Clark, Andrew S. Tindall, John N. Tindall, John Dean, Elisha Dean, H. D. Streeter, Thomas Almy, Mr. Ream and his two sons, Bradford Bailey, James Bailey, and Joseph Wood.

Nicholas R. Hill was born in Clarkston, Monroe County, New York, April 10, 1822. He came to what is now Cedar Springs, in the early part of the year 1855, and entered 120 acres of land on Section 30, in Nelson township, a portion of which tract forms quite a part of the site of Cedar Springs. He built the first house in the place, the building being constructed of pine logs. He laid out and platted the village and established the postoffice, serving as postmaster three years. He built the first frame house in the village, in 1857, and subsequently he purchased the "fair grounds" and lived there four years. Later, he sold that property and resided the remainder of his life in the village which he had founded, continuing, however, the occupa-



tion of a farmer. For a number of years he lumbered in Kent and Muskegon Counties. Mr. Hill was justice of the peace in Nelson township and performed the duties of that office twelve years, and in 1870 was elected to represent his district in the State Legislature. He served in one regular and one extra session, with much credit to himself and satisfaction to his constituents.

David B. Stout was a native of Seneca County, New York, and was born Oct. 9, 1830. He located near Courtland Center, Kent County, in 1849, but later entered forty acres of land from the government in what is now known as Nelson township, and to which he added forty acres more, by purchase. Nelson township was ever afterward his home. No highway existed then in the neighborhood, the site of Cedar Springs was covered with a dense pine forest, and the nearest available railroad by "highway" was at Pontiac, Oakland County. It is almost a witicism to call the trails of those days, highways. Mr. Stout served his fellow-citizens as school superintendent, as highway commissioner, and as township treasurer for a number of years, and each of these offices was filled with ability and faithfulness to duty.

Riley Smith was born in Jefferson County, New York, May 8, 1833. In October, 1854, he came to Nelson and purchased a farm of 160 acres on Section 20. He was a practical surveyor, and in 1866 was elected surveyor of Kent County, but refused to qualify. He followed that profession to some extent, having divided the townships of Nelson, Solon, Courtland and Spencer into sections. In pioneer days he taught school, having acquired a good common school education in his native place. He taught, in all, nine years. On May 10, 1861, at the breaking out of the Civil War, he enlisted in defense of the flag of the Union in Company K, Third Michigan infantry, and was mustered into service June 10 as fifth sergeant; subsequently he was given the rank of second sergeant. He resigned the position in November, 1863, and served till the close of the war as a private. He participated in the first fight at Bull Run, the siege of Yorktown, and fought in all the battles that the Third regiment participated in up to the second battle in the Wilderness, when he was taken ill. He was confined in Saterlee Hospital, at Philadelphia, three months. He joined his regiment the following August and served till Oct. 27, when he was taken prisoner and suffered the terrible torture of Libby Prison till Feb. 17, 1865. He was discharged June 22, 1865, and then returned home and resumed farming.

John N. Tindall was born in New Jersey, March 16, 1829, was educated in the common schools and reared to agricultural pursuits. He came when but a young lad to Michigan with his parents, who located in Oakland County. There he grew to manhood and married, and in 1856 came to Kent County. On March 10, 1857, he purchased eighty acres of land in Nelson township, and devoted the remainder of his active career to its development and cultivation.

William C. Benjamin, a bachelor, came to this township in an early day with a "pocket full of rocks" from California, purchased a fine farm and improved and beautified it. He also repented of his lonely condition, married an intelligent lady and became the father of two children. In the summer of 1869, at the close of harvesting in which he had worked hard, he committed suicide by cutting his



throat—it is supposed in a fit of temporary insanity. This sad tragedy cast a gloom over the entire community where he lived.

The experiences of the early settlers were similar, regardless of locality, and, to some extent, without regard to wealth. Necessaries of life, as we of later generations class them, were not to be procured, by reason of the great distance to be traveled, and hazards encountered in reaching the older settlements. The forest supplied the meats, for the most part, as it did, also, the fruits and sugar. Coffee and tea were luxuries seldom used. This is mentioned to show the simple fare that satisfied the demands of the times. A dinner of corn bread alone, or of meat without bread, was a common repast. Potatoes were early raised, but had not become a household necessity as now. Maple sugar and syrup were among the old-time luxuries easily obtained. The cabins usually had a "shake" roof, fastened on by weight poles, with a clay or puncheon floor and a door made of boards split from native timber, and fastened together with wooden pins, or, in the absence of this, a blanket hung in the opening. The dimensions of the cabin were usually limited to the smallest size which would accommodate the family, the walls of rough logs, cracks "chinked" with split sticks and stones, and plastered with mortar, with sometimes a little cut straw mixed in the "mortar" to prevent its falling out.

The pioneer shoemaker, gunsmith, and blacksmith were welcome adjuncts to the early settlements, as were, also, the backwoods schoolmasters and preachers. The first schools usually embraced only the rudiments—the "three R's." The "master" taught twenty-two days for a month, at a salary of about eighteen or twenty dollars per month and "boarded around." He was oftener selected because of his muscular development than on account of his scholastic attainments, though both were considered essential to complete success. The school "furniture" was in keeping with that which adorned the homes of the pupils, entirely home-made, and of the variety made for utility rather than beauty. The desks were puncheons, or at best planks, resting on wooden pins driven into auger holes in the logs of the wall. These were bored at an angle of about thirty degrees. Fronting the desks were stationary seats made of slabs or puncheons, with flaring legs of wooden pins, and these were made high enough to accommodate the largest pupils, while the smaller ones sat with their feet dangling in mid-air. Globes and outline maps were unknown to the pupils, and were a mystery to the masters. The "text-books" comprised Adams' arithmetic and Webster's Elementary Spelling Book. These covered the curriculum of reading and spelling, mathematics, language and literature, history and science. The ancient "pot-hooks," more difficult to form than any letter in the alphabet, comprised the first lessons in writing, but were never heard of afterward. There was no system by which these characters were made, hence each "master" had a "system" of his own. Sundry boxing of ears and other and more barbarous punishments often followed the pupil's futile efforts at imitating these useless hieroglyphics. And yet we must credit the pioneer schools with producing a class of plain and neat writers, a feature very noticeable, and often commented upon, in the reading of ancient documents. It is equally true that most of the stu-



dents of those early days were excellent spellers, according to the rules then in vogue. But the primitive schools of pioneer days have long since been succeeded by the excellent school system so nicely provided for, in part at least, by the reservation of a portion of the public domain for that purpose.

For many years after the settlement of the township, religious services were conducted by the traveling ministers of various denominations, usually at private houses, or in the school houses of the township.

George Hoyle was the first supervisor of Nelson. The first marriage was that of Clayton Wood to Miss Catherine Bailey. The ceremony was performed at Rockford in 1852. Mrs. Kelsey's daughter was the first white child born in the township, her birth having taken place in 1851. Before the close of that year Mrs. Pearson gave birth to a boy, the first male child in the township.

The village of Sand Lake was at one time thought to be destined to become a thriving city, but fortune was against it, and as the country developed the currents that tended to the upbuilding of a place turned toward others more fortunately located, and Sand Lake was left to continue its existence, in the language of an old pioneer, as "an imaginary city." It is located on the north line of the township, twenty-six miles north of Grand Rapids, on the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, and although the fond hopes of its founders were not realized, it has always been an important trading and shipping point for the farmers. It derived its name from Sand Lake, a beautiful sheet of water on the banks of which the village is built. A postoffice was established there soon after its first settlement, and as related above, there were high hopes of its becoming a city, but it was finally surpassed by other localities which were favored with superior advantages. Sand Lake boasts of an excellent school, in which the patrons take great interest.

Nelson is one of the prosperous townships in Kent County. Agriculture being the principal industry, and in fact almost the exclusive occupation of the people, it has received careful and thoughtful attention, and the farmers are equipped for the varied branches of agricultural pursuits, including extensive stock raising and fruit growing. Early attention was given to the introduction of improved strains of domestic animals, and this has proved a source of pleasure and profit. The well tilled farms, with their substantial residences of modern design, or the old and well built mansions of more ancient days, together with an occasional log house or unpretentious cabin, all evince the varying degrees of prosperity attained by their owners, and emphasize the fact that "there is no place like home." The inhabitants are intelligent, public-spirited people, who trace their lineage, with just pride, to patriotic ancestors, and the perpetuity of our great Republic they are ever ready to defend.

The following is a list of the supervisors of Nelson township from the year of its organization down to the present time: 1855, George Hoyle; 1856, Urias Stout; 1857, Adolphus L. Skinner; 1861, Benjamin F. DeCou; 1862, Adolphus L. Skinner; 1863, Barton Eddy; 1864, Nicholas R. Hill; 1868, David B. Stout; 1869, Henry C. Russell; 1870, Mindrus H. Whitney; 1876, David B. Stout; 1877, Henry



C. Russell; 1878, Albert D. Eldridge; 1879, John Berridge; 1885, Edgar L. Phelps; 1888, John Berridge; 1889, Fred Hubbard; 1891, David Walker; 1894, John Berridge; 1897, John E. Goul; 1902, Fred C. Leger; 1905, John E. Goul; 1909, Morris N. Streeter; 1910, John E. Goul, present incumbent.

Henry C. Russell was born in Plainfield township, Sept. 22, 1842. He was reared on a farm and received a common school education. At the age of twenty he taught a winter school, and in the same year entered a drug store in Plainfield, as clerk. In the fall of 1865 he removed to Cedar Springs and became a partner in the firm of E. Hinman & Company, shingle dealers. In 1867 the firm dissolved and Mr. Russell opened a grocery store, at the same time dealing in shingles. In 1868 he bought a drug stock and store of N. F. Slawson and continued in the drug business until 1880. In 1873, in company with J. W. Phelps, and under the firm name of H. C. Russell & Company, he founded the Cedar Springs Exchange Bank, and thereafter continued in the banking business. Mr. Russell filled various offices in his village. In 1869 and 1877 he was a member of the Board of Supervisors from Nelson. He was the second village president of Cedar Springs and served four terms. In 1870 he took a very active part in the movement looking to the formation of a new county, from Kent, Montcalm, Mecosta and Newaygo Counties. In the fall of 1880 he was elected State Senator by a majority of 5,200 votes. Mr. Russell was one of the prime organizers of the Cedar Springs Union Agricultural and Horticultural Society and acted as one of its directors.

Mindrus H. Whitney was born in Seneca County, New York, Jan. 21, 1824. In 1837 his parents removed to Kent County, Michigan, and settled in Cannon township, where the father entered 160 acres of land and was among the early pioneers. Mr. Whitney passed his early life in the pioneer districts of Kent and obtained such an education as Michigan at that time afforded. He lived in Cannon township until 1859, when he removed to Solon, and in 1869 he removed to Sand Lake. On Nov. 15, 1861, when the dark cloud of the Civil War fell upon our land, in response to the call of our bleeding country, Mr. Whitney enlisted in Company F, Fourteenth Michigan infantry, as orderly sergeant. In January, 1862, with his regiment, he was mustered into the United States service, and on May 14 following he was commissioned second lieutenant. In September, 1863, he was given the rank of first lieutenant in Company D, and served with distinction until January, 1864, when he received his honorable discharge on account of ill health. He served as member of the Board of Supervisors from Nelson six years, and from Solon two years.

Albert D. Eldridge was born in Oneida County, New York, March 18, 1839. He attended school at Casnovia Hill, finishing his education in the University of Hamilton in 1857. In the spring of 1859 he came to Coldwater, Mich., where he followed farming until 1870, when he engaged in the wholesale liquor trade, continuing in that business two years. In 1872 he came to Sand Lake and built a planing mill, in partnership with Andrew Orr. In 1877 he removed the mill to Blanchard, where it burned in 1878. With his former

partner he then built a saw-mill and operated it under the firm name of Eldridge & Orr. He also dealt in shingles. Mr. Eldridge served in the village council of Sand Lake in 1872, and as a member of the Board of Supervisors in 1878.

John Berridge was born in Oakland County, Michigan, April 28, 1845. He was reared on a farm and received his education in the Pontiac Union School. He taught school one year and then went to Lansing, where he was a member of the firm of Berridge & Christian, confectioners, for three years. In 1872 he came to Sand Lake and conducted a grocery two years. He was engaged in butchering up to 1877, when he was elected justice of the peace. He read law and afterward practiced. He was elected supervisor in 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1888, 1894, 1895, and in 1896. He also held the offices of village clerk and village attorney at Sand Lake.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### TYRONE TOWNSHIP

WHEN CREATED—CONDITIONS—MRS. LOUISA SCOTT—EARLY SETTLERS  
—FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES—KENT CITY—CASNOVIA—WATER  
COURSES—BEAVER DAM—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

The organization of this township was provided for on Jan. 10, 1855. The act creating it provided that "all that part of the county of Kent designated in the United States survey as township number ten north, of range number twelve west, be and the same is hereby set off from the township of Sparta, and erected into a township by the name of Tyrone." The school house "near Mrs. Louisa Scott's" was designated as the place for holding the first township meeting, and the date thereof was the first Monday of April, 1855.

The township of course is in the form of a square, bounded on all sides by straight lines, six miles in length. The soil is exceedingly rich, and is not surpassed in fertility by any land in the county. The River Rouge furnishes the drainage of the township, taking a southerly course through the eastern part. The Pere Marquette Railroad also traverses the township, with important stations at the villages of Kent City and Casnovia. The township is abundantly supplied with well kept roads. In the early days its territory was a popular hunting ground, the heavy timber affording excellent cover and favorite resorts for all the larger game found in the State. Even after the general settlement had progressed for some years, large game was plentiful, and foreign hunting parties frequently visited the locality, and were well rewarded for their efforts. About three-fourths of the township was originally timbered with pine, which extended along the Rouge River in the east, and across the north part in connection with the great Muskegon belt. The southwest portion was timbered with beech and maple, interspersed with some pine throughout nearly the whole extent—there being but two sections, 30 and 31, which had none.



In 1849 Mrs. Louisa Scott and family arrived to board workmen on the State road then being made on the west line of this township, by John Brooks, of Newaygo, who had the contract from the State. The family were deprived of the father, by insanity, a short time after going into the woods; but, owing to the great perseverance of Mrs. Scott, they remained and succeeded in building up a good home, and a fine farm on Section 31, in the southwest part of the township. In 1850, Lot Ferguson, from Hillsdale County, went about one mile farther and settled on the southwest part of Section 19, where the village of Casnovia now stands. Alfred Bonner settled on Section 30, but remained only a short time. In 1852, Jacob Smith, from Cleveland, Ohio, and Harlow Jackson, from Branch County, Michigan, settled one mile east from the State road, and a mile north from the township line, on the State road from Cedar Springs to Muskegon. There was not a white settler east of them nearer than Greenville. In 1853, John Thompson came into the same neighborhood, from Tioga county, New York, and about the same time Joseph Kies came from Hillsdale County, Michigan, and settled near Mr. Ferguson. In 1855, Uriah Chubb, who had been living for a few years in Ottawa County, settled on the west part of Section 30, and Leander Smith, from Otsego County, New York, went into the Jackson neighborhood. About this time, Asa Clark and family, from Steuben County, New York, penetrated the forest northeast from Sparta Center, or Nashville, as it was then called, and built their cabin on Section 36, in the southeast part of the township. Here they had no neighbors, except those who came for a few months at a time to cut pine logs along the river, and during the Civil War they were the only regular settlers in the east part of the township. James Blackall, from Sparta, also went on Section 32, in 1855. From that time to the commencement of the Civil War there were many additions, and after the close of the war the population of the township increased very fast.

The first sermon preached in the township was by the Rev. Francis Prescott, the meeting being held at the pioneer school house on Section 31, in 1854. After that a missionary preacher, a Methodist, held meetings once in two weeks. In the first year, Elders Bennett, Congdon, and Smith held meetings. A Sabbath School was started at an early day, and William N. Wylie officiated as superintendent. The first school was taught by Miss Susan Field, who became the wife of Myron Buck, of Cedar Springs. The next winter the school was kept by Miss Nettie Wetmore, of Grand Rapids, who subsequently married D. Amos Rood. As early as 1853 a postoffice was established at Casnovia with Daniel Bennett as postmaster.

The village of Kent City is situated one mile north of the southern border of the township, on the Pere Marquette Railroad. It dates its settlement from 1874. The postoffice was formerly known as Ball Creek and the station as Tyrone. It has a public hall that will seat 1,000 people, Baptist and Methodist Episcopal Churches, a bank, a newspaper, and good public schools. The village is surrounded by a fine farming country. It was incorporated in 1908, and is an important shipping point. Casnovia is a thriving little village on the line between Kent and Muskegon Counties. It was first settled by Lot Ferguson in 1850. He was the first to open his doors for the ac-



commodation of travelers, and he soon put out his sign and kept a regular country tavern. In a short time his little one-story log cabin became too small for the accommodation of his guests, and for that purpose he erected a good frame building, which was afterward kept by Mr. Mizner, and later by Mr. Heath, who erected a large hall adjoining. The first store goods were sold in the village by H. Hamilton.

Rouge River, as stated before, is the principal stream in Tyrone township. It rises in Rice Lake, in the township of Grant, Newaygo County, about three miles north of the township line, enters Tyrone about one and one-half miles west of the northeast corner of the township, flows a little east of south, and then flows out near the southeast corner into Sparta township. It is fed by several small streams, among which Duke Creek, which flows through Solon and comes in from the northeast on Section 36, is the largest. Ball Creek has its headwaters in several small streams in the west part of the township, flows southeast, and passes out into Sparta near the middle of the township line. A curiosity was plainly visible on this stream in an early day, on Section 33. It was no more nor less than an old beaver dam. This dam was about sixty rods long and rose to a height of three, four, and even five feet in some places. It was built in a zig-zag form, the sections being uniformly about two rods in length. It must have been built a long time ago, for large trees were found growing on the embankment. Where the pond was, the timber had been killed by the flowage, leaving nothing but a marsh. This pond had apparently covered from ten to fifteen acres, and perhaps more. The remains of trees, cut down by those curious and wonderful animals, were found there, and it is said that they yet showed plainly the marks of teeth in the wood. The stream had broken through in three places. South Crockery Creek, in the southwest part of the township, rises in Sparta, flows northwest through two small lakes, on Section 32, thence across 31 and out into Muskegon County, on the west. There is a lake of about twenty acres on the line of Sections 17 and 18, the outlet of which flows southeast, across the township into Rouge River. Another, nearly as large, near the center of Section 22, also has a small stream flowing from it to Rouge River. Originally, there was considerable wet, swampy land in the northeast part of the township, and a few small swamps in various other parts, but they have all been successfully drained and are now excellent agricultural land.

The following are the names of those who have filled the position of supervisor of Tyrone township from the time of its organization down to the present: 1855, Uriah Chubb; 1861, Albert Clute; 1862, Milan L. Squier; 1863, Joseph Keyes; 1865, Uriah Chubb; 1868, Charles T. Smith; 1869, James M. Armstrong; 1872, Augustus C. Ayers; 1873, Henry C. Wylie; 1875, Henry J. Barrett; 1877, Henry H. Wylie; 1878, George Hemsley; 1881, George Snyder; 1887, William W. Fenton; 1889, George Snyder; 1891, Herman Coburn; 1892, Joseph Holben; 1894, William W. Fenton; 1895, Joseph Holben; 1896, William O. Holmes; 1897, William W. Fenton; 1898, William O. Holmes; 1900, Charles S. Parks; 1903, William O. Holmes; 1905, Joseph Holben; 1908, William O. Holmes; 1909, Albert Jackson; 1914, William O. Holmes, present incumbent.



Milan L. Squier was born near Oswego, N. Y., Nov. 6, 1835. With his parents he settled in Calhoun County, Michigan, in 1843, and afterward went to Hillsdale County, where his father died in 1873. Mr. Squier was bred a farmer, but at the age of twenty-five went to Kalamazoo and worked for a stage company two years; then, in partnership with a man named O. C. Willard, he purchased the line between Grand Rapids and Croton, by way of Newaygo. They operated the route until 1862, and during the Civil War Mr. Squier was in the southern part of the State in a boot and shoe store. He removed from Kent County in 1862 and returned in 1866, built a store at Casnovia and embarked in the sale of general merchandise. In 1867 he was appointed postmaster, and he held the office of supervisor one term.

Henry H. Wylie was a native of New York, a son of Henry C. Wylie, also a native of the Empire State, of Scotch descent, and who was a predecessor of his son in the office of supervisor. In 1846 the family settled in Sparta and in 1859 they came to Tyrone, where the father died in 1877. Henry H. pursued farming the most of his life, although he gave considerable attention to the breeding of cattle and sheep—shorthorns and thoroughbreds. He enlisted in the Civil War, in 1864, in Battery A, First Michigan artillery, and served eleven months, when he was mustered out at Jackson. He held the position of supervisor one year.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### SOLON TOWNSHIP

ORGANIZATION—FIRST SETTLED—EDWIN G. ROGERS—FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING—LAKES AND WATER COURSES—CEDAR SPRINGS—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

The organization of this township dates from Jan. 7, 1857, on which date it was set off from the township of Algoma, with boundaries described as follows: "Township 10 north, of range 11 west." And the Board of Supervisors, being empowered to designate the meeting place for the first township meeting, selected the house of Walter Rowe, which was considered a central location.

The surface of the township is generally rolling, and pine originally predominated in the forests. The pine of course was interspersed with some grand old oaks in some parts, and in others with beech and occasionally a little maple. There were bears, deer, wolves, and wild-cats in great numbers, which afforded great sport for the local hunters in pioneer days.

The township was first settled in 1854. Some of the earlier residents claimed that a Mr. Beals, who remained but a short time, was the first settler, and others that J. M. Rounds, who afterward resided in Algoma, was in advance. They were soon followed by John and Martin Hicks, from Indiana, and also Robbins Hicks, from Ohio. In 1856 and 1857, the Jewells, Smiths, Roys and Whispels came, preceded in 1854 by Ansel Rogers.

Ansel Rogers was born in Fabius, Onondaga County, New York, Sept. 16, 1806. He was reared to farming, and about 1853 came to Michigan, lived in Eaton County one year, and in 1854 purchased eighty acres of land in Solon township from the government at the regulation price of \$1.25 per acre, the deed bearing date of April 1, 1854. This was the second farm taken up in the township, the Beal farm, near Cedar Springs, being the first. Mr. Rogers had made but a small start toward clearing away the heavy growth of beech and maple timber, when his son, Edwin G., arrived to render him valuable aid in this toilsome work. The father was soon afterward called away, dying in April, 1865, and his remains were interred in the Solon cemetery.

Edwin G. Rogers, who thus became in early life one of the pioneers of Solon township, was born in Wyoming County, New York, March 15, 1839. At the age of seventeen years he came to Michigan, but remained only a short time, when he returned to New York, where he worked by the month at the rate of \$7 a part of the time, and finally brought his sisters to the forest home which his father had entered in Solon township. The mother had died in 1852. There being no habitation as yet on the farm, young Rogers was forced to find shelter for himself and sisters with Elihu Brayman, a nearby neighbor, until they had erected a little log cabin, 16x20 feet, with mud and stick chimney. The whole of Solon township, then known as North Algoma, was an almost impenetrable forest, and Mr. Rogers' little trading was done at Rockford, thirteen miles distant, and then known as Laphamville. This long trip he made on foot, and on one occasion carried two 16-pound cakes of maple sugar on his back. On his return trip he journeyed via Porter's Hollow and took home a 50-pound sack of flour in a similar manner. One occasion an Indian came to the cabin of Mr. Rogers, asked for pen, ink, and paper, wrote in a legible hand a note to a neighbor of Mr. Rogers, and requested that it be delivered, per address, at the first favorable opportunity. Seeing that Mr. Rogers was surprised, the Indian explained as follows: "I am an educated Indian; have been a college student, and am chief of this tribe."

J. D. Watkins, later a resident of Alpine township, settled on Section 26 in 1855. A steam saw-mill, capable of cutting 10,000,000 shingles and 2,000,000 feet of lumber per year, was erected by George French, of Rockford, on the southwest corner of Section 12, in 1868. A first-class steam saw-mill, on the north line of Section 1, was erected in 1869 on the site of one built the year previous and destroyed by fire. The capacity of this mill was 20,000 feet of lumber and 16,000 shingles per day. The early mills in Solon township were generally run by steam, notwithstanding the fact that good water power could have been obtained on almost any section where the mills were located.

In accordance with the provisions of the resolution establishing the new township, the first township meeting was held on the first Monday in April, 1857, and officers were elected as follows: Edward Jewell, supervisor; John E. Roys, clerk; John D. Watkins, treasurer; Andrew Fluent, Munson Robinson, and Obadiah Smith, justices of the peace.



John E. Roys was born Aug. 3, 1824, in Massachusetts, and he received his education in the high schools of that State. His early life was spent on a farm, and at the age of twenty-two he enlisted in the Mexican War, in the United States marines, on the ship "Independence," but most of his service was on land. He served four years before being finally discharged in 1850, after which he landed at San Francisco, Cal., and went into the gold mines. In 1853 he started for the States via Mexico, but on landing in that country he was stricken with the yellow fever and lay nigh unto death for some time. On his recovery he continued his journey and, in 1854, landed in New York, and the same year came to Michigan and settled in Kalamazoo for one year. In 1855 he came to Solon and settled on Section 35, on government land. He was the clerk of the meeting when the township was organized. In 1862 he enlisted in the Twenty-first Michigan infantry, in Company H, and was with his regiment in five very severe battles, among them being Missionary Ridge. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Bentonville and was kept in confinement until the final surrender, when he was regularly discharged and returned home to his family.

Munson Robinson was born in New York, March 24, 1820. In early life he lived in Indiana, where he obtained a common school education, and in 1854 came to Solon township and settled on Section 20, where he spent the remainder of his life. All was then in a state of nature, and Mr. Robinson cut through four miles of woods to make his way to his place. He was one of the first justices of the peace in Solon township, and he also held other offices.

Obadiah Smith was born in Ontario County, New York, in 1832. His early education was obtained in the common schools, and most of his active life was spent in farming and lumbering until 1877, when he engaged in the practice of medicine. In 1855 he "took up" eighty acres of land on Section 11, and was also one of the first justices of the peace in Solon township, besides holding other township offices.

There is a small lake on the north line of Section 4, lying partly in Newaygo County, generally known as Gilbert Lake. One and a half miles east of this, on the northwest corner of Section 2, is a large, flowing spring, which is the source of White Creek. This stream flows southeasterly through three lakes, the first being on the lines of Sections 2 and 3, the next near the center of Section 2, and the third on the south line of Section 2 and partially in 7. This stream then flows a little east of south, to the north part of Section 24, where it unites with Duke Creek, flowing in from Nelson township. At the junction of these two streams, Messrs. Wellman & Company constructed a dam in 1856, at a cost of \$1,000, with the intention of erecting a large saw-mill, which, however, was not built. From this point Duke Creek flows in a southwesterly direction across the township and passes out on Section 30, into Tyrone township. It is fed by several small streams, the largest of which comes from a small lake near the center of Section 14 and known as Reed's Lake, and flows into the main creek on the north side of Section 28. In an early day this stream was much used for running logs to the Rouge River and thence to Grand River. There is a small lake on the north line of Section 15, known as Mud Lake, and the size of all of these lakes varies from ten to 100 acres each.



The village of Cedar Springs was platted in 1859 and was incorporated in 1871. It is situated twenty miles northeast from Grand Rapids, on the line of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, and lies about two-thirds in Solon and one-third in Nelson, one mile from their south line. The first settler here was Robbins Hicks, who came in 1855, and he has been previously mentioned as one of the early residents of the township. There were but few inhabitants and but a very limited amount of business in the village until 1867, when the railroad was completed to that point. This immediately infused life into the place, and it continued to grow rapidly, as it was the northern terminal of the railroad for about two years. Since that time it has steadily progressed, and with an east and west road, the Grand Trunk, as a shipping point it has but few equals in rural regions. It has Baptist, Methodist Episcopal and Free Methodist Churches, a \$20,000 school building, public hall, an opera house seating 500, a bank and two weekly newspapers—the "Clipper" and the "Liberal."

The following is a list of the supervisors of Solon township from its organization down to the present time: 1857, Edward Jewell; 1859, Nicholas R. Hill; 1860, Edward Jewell; 1862, Nicholas R. Hill; 1863, Edward Jewell; 1864, Edward Pryce; 1865, Oliver P. Jewell; 1866, John J. Dean; 1867, Reuben W. Jewell; 1868, Mindrus H. Whitney; 1869, Asel B. Fairchild; 1871, Benjamin Fairchild; 1872, Edward Pryce; 1878, Asel B. Fairchild; 1880, Oliver R. Lewis; 1883, Albert G. Rose; 1884, Jeremiah Payne; 1888, Edmund C. Woodworth; 1897, Lewis G. Sevey; 1901, Adelbert Birch; 1903, Edmund C. Woodworth; 1907, Lewis G. Sevey; 1909, Dennis J. Verburg; 1911, John B. Maynard; 1913, Walter Spaeth; 1915, Dennis J. Verburg; 1916, Lewis G. Sevey, present incumbent.

Oliver Perry Jewell was born in Hector, Schuyler County, New York, March 22, 1825. His education was mainly obtained in the common schools of his native town, and he learned the trade of printer in the city of New York, where he spent his spare time at Cornelius Institute. He taught five terms of district school, and came to Cedar Springs in the fall of 1857, and in connection with his father purchased a farm. The following fall he brought his family, made some improvements and partly built a house, but owing to the ill health of himself and wife returned to New York State, in August, 1859. In 1860 he was engaged on the Seneca County Sentinel, published at Ovid, N. Y., and on the breaking out of the Civil War he became the publisher of the paper and labored ardently in behalf of the Union cause. A year later he disposed of the office and engaged as a journeyman printer at Syracuse and Penn Yan, N. Y. He returned to Michigan in 1863, on the death of his father. In 1864 he was engaged a few months on the Grand Rapids "Eagle," and in 1867 went to Chicago, where he worked at his trade about five years.

John J. Dean was born in Warren County, New York, Nov. 26, 1819. He was reared a farmer's boy, and obtained his education in the common schools. At the age of twenty-two he learned the blacksmith trade and followed it until 1864, when he came to Courtland township, Kent County, and subsequently to Cedar Springs, where he pursued his trade.

Asel B. Fairchild was born Nov. 5, 1826, in New York. He was educated in the common schools of Michigan and Indiana and was



sent to an academy two years. He was by trade a machinist and passed many years in its pursuit. He served in the Civil War as a veterinary surgeon and remained until 1864. He settled at Cedar Springs in 1865, and entered trade, and two and a half years later commenced lumbering. At the expiration of ten years he turned his attention to farming and breeding horses. He served in several official positions in Nelson and Solon townships.

Jeremiah Payne was born in Niagara County, New York, in 1827. He was educated in his native state and reared on a farm. He was ordained as a minister at the age of twenty-nine and commenced his ministerial work. He organized 100 societies of the United Brethren Church and dedicated thirty churches. His first year of ministerial work was spent in Wisconsin, where he itinerated, traveling afoot and preaching wherever opportunity served, sometimes under shelter, sometimes in the open air. He did most of his work in Ohio and Wisconsin, chiefly in the latter state. In 1871 he settled in Solon, where he developed a well improved farm.

Adelbert Birch was a native of Sterling, Cayuga County, New York, and was born Dec. 27, 1863. He was an infant when brought to Michigan by his parents, and the major part of his life was consequently passed in Solon township. He received a good common school education and was reared to farming. For eleven years he was identified with lumbering operations when the pine timber was being cleared from this section of Kent County, running logs down the river in the spring season.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

### SPENCER TOWNSHIP

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES—FIRST WHITE INHABITANT—NAMES OF EARLY SETTLERS — ORGANIZATION AND FIRST OFFICERS — EARLY LUMBERING ESTABLISHMENTS—LIST OF SUPERVISORS.

Spencer is in the northeastern corner of Kent County, with the township of Nelson for its boundary on the west, Montcalm County on the north and east, and Oakfield township on the south. It comprises Congressional township 10, range 9 west, and contains of course thirty-six sections of land. The only water course of note within this township is a small stream called Black Creek, which enters from the northwest and passes southeasterly through the township. It was of sufficient width and depth during the lumbering days to float logs, and a number of millions of feet were run out every year. It has several small tributaries, among which are Clear and Butternut Creeks. Not unlike the other townships of Kent County, especially the region of country north of Grand River, there is very little rough, untillable land, and the greater portion of it has been cleared of its native timber. The valleys of the streams are very productive, and this is equally true of the higher lands. A reasonable portion of the fields is given over to pasture for the various kinds of live stock, which are very extensively raised. It is one of the best

agricultural districts in the county, and yields large crops of wheat, corn, oats, etc. The farmers are mostly well-to-do and possess fine residences and comfortable homes, as a trip through the township will readily make manifest. Although possessing no railroad facilities, Cannon and Spencer being the only townships in the county without this means of travel, nor having any large commercial mart within its borders, it has a rich soil, an enterprising population, and all the elements of a thrifty farming district.

The township was organized in 1861 under the name of Celsus, but the name was later changed to Spencer, in honor of Thomas Spencer, one of the early settlers. Prior to 1861, it was a part of Oakfield township.

The first white inhabitant of Spencer was an old trapper, by the name of Lincoln. He had a shanty on the bank of the lake of that name, and there he lived, Daniel Boone like, for a number of years. The first regular settler of the township was Cyrus B. Thomas, who located in the summer of 1846. Henry Stroup, the second settler, located in January, 1848. Both of these settled on a plain in the southeastern part of the township, near the Oakfield line, and for a number of years were the only actual settlers.

Henry Stroup was born in 1815, in Pennsylvania, and was reared and educated in Seneca County, New York. His life was one of varied occupations. He was a driver on the Erie Canal seven years, and after coming to Michigan was engaged about twenty years running logs on Flat River. In 1848 he settled on eighty acres of land on Section 34, which tract he located from the government at a period when all of Spencer township was an unbroken forest. He was the second settler in the township, and he held the office of highway commissioner, justice of the peace, and other official positions.

Matthew B. Hatch, afterward supervisor of Spencer township, and one of the earliest settlers, came to the township in 1853. He was born in Steuben County, New York, Aug. 20, 1831. He was educated in the common schools of Michigan, and was all his life a tiller of the soil. He came to Kent county in the Spring of 1853, and made his permanent settlement in Spencer township three years later. The Indians held the territory by right of possession, but they were on the friendliest terms with invaders, and Mr. Hatch found shelter and experienced kindness at their hands. He slept in the hut of an Indian while clearing his "patch" and building his humble cabin. He carried provisions for his family on his back from Greenville, a distance of thirteen and one-half miles, following an Indian trail. At the date of his locating, Henry Stroup, Cyrus B. Thomas, Abner and Jessie Hawkins, Owen Cooper, and Jacob Lambertson were the only other settlers in this portion of the township, which then included Oakfield. Mr. Hatch served as township clerk four years, justice of the peace five years, and supervisor seven years.

Jacob Lambertson was born in New Jersey, was reared a farmer, and was married in his native State. He then for a number of years resided in the State of New York, whence he came to Michigan, and first located in Oakland County. Several years later, in 1855, he removed to Spencer township, where he purchased 200 acres of land, 100 acres of which was entered from the government. He died in



1885, on his farm in Spencer township, at the good old age of eighty-three years.

In the list of early settlers may also be mentioned the names of S. B. Cowles, B. G. Parks, Jacob Van Zandt, William H. Hewitt, William T. Parshall, Daniel Haskins, the Cooper family, and others.

Shepard B. Cowles was born in Massachusetts, March 15, 1826. He came to Kent County in 1854, and located the land on which he settled in 1855. He was present at the first township meeting and was one of the inspectors of the election. He was the prime mover in changing the name of the township to Spencer, and at different times he held nearly all of the township offices. In early life Mr. Cowles was a mason and followed the business in all its branches some years. In 1846 he enlisted for service in the Mexican War and did military duty fourteen months under General Scott. He also served in the Civil War, participating in some of its most celebrated campaigns and marching with Sherman to the sea. Mr. Cowles was one of the early members of the school of vegetarians, and he also eschewed the use of tea, coffee, and tobacco.

Beriah G. Parks was born in New York in 1826. He attended the common school to obtain his education and was trained to the vocation of a farmer. He came to Michigan in 1847, but soon returned to New York, where he was married the following year. On his return to Michigan he settled in Jackson County, and in 1856 came to Spencer township, then a part of Oakfield. Mr. Parks served as township treasurer eleven years, highway commissioner and justice of the peace, and ranked among the best citizens of the township.

Jacob Van Zandt was born in Cortland County, New York, May 4, 1832. As a lad of four years, with his parents, he made the trip by wagon from his birthplace to Montezuma, Cayuga County, New York, thence to Buffalo via the Erie Canal, and to Detroit on board the "North America," one of the finest boats to navigate Lake Erie in that early day. He qualified himself to teach and followed that occupation for fifteen terms in Missouri and Michigan. The first land purchased by Mr. Van Zandt was a forty-acre tract of "oak openings" in Allegan County. There he erected a shanty and kept bachelor's hall. He found plenty of employment as a rail-splitter, and he achieved quite a reputation at this work. This land he traded for a land warrant in Lynn County, Kansas, whither he went, and there he resided during a part of the "border ruffian" troubles. From Kansas he removed to Missouri and for three years taught school in Bates County, that State. After his residence in Missouri he returned to Michigan in 1861, and afterward made it his home. In Spencer township he secured a piece of land from which all the pine had been cut, only hard wood remaining. He made short work of clearing away the remainder of the forest, "baching" the meanwhile in a shanty, 24x16 feet. In 1866 he was elected supervisor, again in 1874, and was elected township clerk in 1873. He also served as school inspector, justice of the peace and member of the school board.

As before stated, the township of Spencer was organized in 1861, and the first election was held that year, the following persons being elected to fill the township offices: Freeman Van Wickle, supervisor; Henry A. Freeman, clerk; Daniel Haskins, treasurer; William W.

Hewitt and Freeman Van Wickle, commissioners of highways; William W. Hewitt and Edwin D. Clark, justices; Hiram Conse and Alfred Hulburt, school inspectors; William H. Smith, George McClelland, Henry Stroup, and Darius Gray, constables.

The first lumbering establishment in Spencer township was started on Black Creek in 1853. During the year 1870, one million feet of lumber was run out of that stream. The Van Wickle saw-mill was located on the same creek, near the south line of Section 25. It was built in 1856 with Van Wickle as proprietor. The Powell steam saw and shingle mill was situated on the bank of Lincoln Lake, on Section 27. It was built in 1867 with William B. Powell as proprietor. The Parks steam saw mill, near the center of Section 7, was built in 1868, with E. H. Gibbs as proprietor. The Griswold steam saw and shingle mill was located near the southwest corner of Section 29. It was built in 1869, with Jabes W. Griswold as proprietor. The Spencer mills were built in 1855, by Thomas Spencer, near the southeast corner of Section 27, and at this place a postoffice was established and a little settlement started, the postoffice and settlement being named Spencer. The mill was burned in 1861, the postoffice has been discontinued, and the prospective village was never fully realized.

Among the lakes in this township, Lincoln is the largest. It is a fine sheet of water, situated a short distance east of the center of the township, and is nearly one and one-half miles in length, by one-half mile in width.

Beginning in the year of its organization, the following is a list of the supervisors of Spencer township down to the present time: 1861, Freeman Van Winkle; 1862, Thomas Spencer; 1863, Charles S. DeCou; 1865, Charles D. Spencer; 1866, Jacob Van Zandt; 1867, Matthew B. Hatch; 1874, Jacob Van Zandt; 1875, Scott Griswold; 1879, John Moran; 1881, Michael Ward; 1882, John Moran; 1883, Scott Griswold; 1885, Volney F. Cowles; 1886, Scott Griswold; 1889, James Ward; 1893, Scott Griswold; 1896, James Ward; 1899, John Moran; 1901, Elmer G. Storey; 1903, John Griswold; 1913, Volney F. Cowles; 1916, John Griswold, present incumbent.

Elmer G. Storey was a native of Grattan township and was born Dec. 7, 1863. He was reared on the farm in his native township, receiving a thorough education in the Union School, and he remained with his father until twenty-five years old. In 1885 he purchased eighty acres of unimproved land in Section 20, Spencer township, and in November, 1888, settled there permanently. Conceiving that many benefits would accrue to all fruit growers in Spencer if facilities for caring for the crop were supplied, in 1891 he erected an evaporator and for years did an excellent business. He served one term as justice of the peace, as township clerk four consecutive years, and as supervisor two years.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### POLITICS AND OFFICIAL HONORS

FIRST GENERAL ELECTION—PANIC OF 1837—PRESIDENT JACKSON—  
POLITICAL EXCITEMENT—REPUBLICAN PARTY—ELECTION STATIS-  
TICS—NATIONAL AND STATE OFFICIALS—SKETCHES.

Kent County received its first permanent white settler in the person of Rix Robinson, in 1821, three years before the remarkable Presidential contest occurred between Jackson, Adams, Clay, and Crawford. The administration of Mr. Monroe had been so pacific and conciliatory in its measures that the party lines previously existing had become almost obliterated, and it appeared to be conceded that his policy had established "an era of good feeling." Means of communication with the outer world, inhabited by civilized people, were then so limited, and newspapers and documents so scarce and difficult to obtain that the political excitement in new settlements was not sufficient to disturb neighborhood tranquility. But when the election, under the forms of the Constitution, was transferred to the House of Representatives, after the meeting of Congress on the first Monday in December, 1824, and when it became known that, by the decision of the House, the popular voice had been disregarded by the choice of John Quincy Adams, and intelligence of the result finally penetrated the fastnesses of the dwellers in the Michigan wilderness, it aroused a feeling that had a tendency to form political classification. But sharp party lines were not drawn for many years, and even when they were they did not often embrace candidates for popular suffrage of a lesser grade than federal and state officers, rarely extending to candidates for merely local positions. In process of time, however, political organizations were formed upon a broader basis, and they contested for possession of the smaller official plums, making the organization of political parties, although occasionally broken, generally more compact.

Until 1834 the party adverse to the Democratic organization had been known as National Republicans and Anti-Masons, but in that year all who were opposed to the Democrat party formed a coalition and changed their name to Whig, and under this banner fought their battles until 1854, when a fusion between the Free-Soilers and Know-Nothings was made, and both elements combined under the name of Republican. There existed, however, for many years in Kent County, a small but brave and earnest body of Abolitionists, who were denounced and persecuted by both Democrats and Whigs, who vied in making assaults upon "the incendiary Abolitionists."

The first general election in which the few white inhabitants of the county participated was held in 1836, with but one polling place in the county and that was at the village of Grand Rapids. Fifty-four votes were cast for Martin Van Buren for President, and seven votes were classed as scattering.

About the time that Kent County was rapidly increasing her population, during the first years of her existence as a separate divi-

sion, and as a component part of the new state of Michigan, the country experienced one of those financial panics which have so many times shaken commercial communities to their center. As this had an important influence upon the political events of that time, it may be well to enter briefly into the details insofar as they relate to political action. In December, 1816, a new United States bank was chartered for a term of twenty years. This institution, located at Philadelphia, became in the course of years the center of business interests. It was the custodian of the moneys of the government, and the government was the owner of a considerable amount of its stock; it could and did control the rates of discount. It could make or break private or state banks by a bestowal or withdrawal of its confidence, and as it controlled the pockets of the nation, so it began to also control its opinions and political action. President Jackson attacked the bank in his first annual message, in 1829, and returned to the attack in the annual messages of 1830 and 1831. Notwithstanding the hostility of the President, Congress, in July, 1832, passed an act granting the bank a new charter. This act the President promptly vetoed, but its failure produced no immediate effect, as the old charter did not expire until December, 1836.

The Presidential campaign of 1832 was then in progress. Jackson was nominated for re-election, and the re-chartering of the bank was one of the issues between parties at that election, but Michigan being yet in its territorial stage of existence, the few white inhabitants of Kent County could take no part in the settlement of the vexed controversy. Jackson was re-elected, and with him a House of Representatives sympathizing with his financial views. In his message of that year the President recommended the removal of the deposits and the sale of the bank stock belonging to the United States. So thoroughly entrenched was the bank in the business interests of the country that Congress dare not make the attack. But so soon as Congress had adjourned, the President directed the Secretary of the Treasury to remove the deposits. The Secretary, William J. Duane, hesitated. There were about \$10,000,000 of government funds in the bank; the bank loans amounted to \$60,000,000, and were so distributed as to effect almost every hamlet in the nation, and the secretary had not sufficient courage to jostle the monster that might easily crush whole parties, and whose destruction, if accomplished, would bring ruin on almost every business house, and whose dying throes would be felt in every household in the land. The President at length made a peremptory order to remove the money, and to deposit it in certain state banks. The Secretary promptly refused, and the President as promptly removed him and appointed Roger B. Taney, of Maryland, later chief justice of the United States Supreme Court, to the Secretary's office. The business community was startled, and prophecies of widespread disaster were freely made, but an iron hand was at the helm of state, and nothing would stay its work or change its purpose. The new Secretary commenced the removal in October, 1833; the greater part was removed within four months, and the entire work was completed within nine months. The designated state banks received the deposits, and to relieve the threatened financial disaster, discounted freely. Indeed, the deposit of the national funds among several rival banks stimulated reckless specu-



lation. Each bank was anxious to do more business than its neighbor, and therefore in every possible way made money easily obtainable. They believed the money would remain until needed by the government for ordinary governmental purposes, and therefore treated it as so much capital, and increased their circulation in proportion to the deposit. Money was plenty, and business was unduly stimulated. Internal improvements and all the industrial pursuits were inordinately revived, and reckless speculation, especially in real estate, was largely indulged in, and in 1836 it amounted to a mania. Says Lossing: "A hundred cities and a thousand villages were laid out on broad sheets of paper, and made the basis of vast moneyed transactions."

If Jackson was an enemy of extravagance he also was a firm believer in the doctrine of State Rights, and during his administration the doctrine was strictly and severely enforced. He was not prepared, like Calhoun, to carry it to the length of nullification and secession, but so far as he believed in it, he unrelentingly applied it to the affairs of the general government. By that code all the receipts of the government, in excess of its expenditures on the narrowest basis, belonged to the states, and to them it should go. Accordingly, in January, 1836, Congress directed the Secretary of the Treasury to divide the money in excess of \$5,000,000 among the several states, on the basis of their representation in the House of Representatives. Notwithstanding this portent of the gathering storm, it was unheeded, and reckless speculation continued and increased into madness. In the midst of this widespread financial dissipation (July 11, 1836) the President caused a treasury order to be issued, directing that all duties should be paid in gold and silver coin. A deputation of New York merchants waited on him to secure its rescission. But he was inexorable. He told them hard times were produced by reckless expenditure and speculation, and any measure that would stop the flood-tide of extravagance, although productive of present distress, would eventually be of service to the country. It was in times such as these that the state of Michigan first participated in the election of a President of the United States.

But to continue the story of the panic of 1837: At length the time fixed by Congress for the distribution of the government funds arrived. More than a year had elapsed since the passage of the act gave notice to the banks and the business community to prepare for the effects of shortened capital, but no preparation had been made. On the contrary, recklessness had increased in proportion as the time for the preparation shortened. In proportion as the currency was converted into coin for payment to the government, the amount available for business purposes was decreased. Discounts could not be obtained, and therefore business could not be continued. In the months of March and April, 1837, there were failures in the city of New York aggregating more than \$100,000,000! A deputation of merchants waited on Mr. Van Buren, then just seated in the Presidential chair, and asked him to defer the collection of duties on imports, to rescind the treasury order of July 11, 1836, and to call an extra session of Congress. He refused, and on May 10 all the banks of New York suspended payment, and the banks of the entire country followed their example.



Such conditions in the financial and industrial world could not fail to have a great influence in American politics, and 1840 was a year of great political excitement. The opposition to the Jackson Democracy had been out of power for twelve years, and extraordinary efforts were made to regain it. Contrary to expectation, the times had not improved since 1837, but were constantly growing worse. In 1838, and even in 1839, men had been kept at work, and although paid in "wild-cat" money, they were busy, and consequently had no time to grumble. But now nearly the whole working class was out of employment, discontented, and complaining. The Whigs affected to believe the hard times were all chargeable to the destruction of the United States bank, and seemed to think that with such an institution in the country, extravagance and patent violation of the laws of trade would go unpunished. They had again nominated General Harrison for the Presidency, and adopting coon skins, hard cider, and log cabins as their insignia, and crying "Corruption" at every breath, made the campaign. On their banners was the inscription, "Two dollars a day and roast beef under Harrison—sixpence a day and sheep's pluck under Van Buren." The campaign, although perhaps greater in the intensity of excitement, was not unlike that of 1896 in some respects. The idle, the dissolute, and the unthinking rushed after the banner that promised so much, and joined in the hue and cry against the party in power. The material for large processions was at hand, for mechanics and laborers had little else to do. Those who could sing were employed in vociferating log-cabin songs, and those who could not sing hallooed themselves hoarse in the praise of hard cider, Tippecanoe and Tyler too.

Perhaps the best glimpse of conditions as they existed locally, in 1840, is given by the one remaining issue of the Grand River Times, of May 29. The paper was Whig in politics, ardently supporting the cause of William Henry Harrison and John Tyler. In this issue interesting accounts were given of political activities, although the election was still nearly six months away. According to the account, ex-Governor Mason had spoken at what the Democrats called "the largest political meeting ever held on Grand River." The Whig meeting in answer to this was held at the court house on May 22. With the formality then characteristic of such gatherings, H. Osgood was chosen president, J. F. Chubb and S. F. Butler, vice-presidents, and J. M. Nelson and N. H. White, secretaries. Dr. Higginson stated the object of the meeting and the speakers were Hon. T. J. Drake, Judge Ewing, of Indiana, and Lieutenant-Governor Gordon, who made particular answer to Governor Mason's speech. The meeting adopted a resolution "that the Whigs of Michigan contribute 500 barrels of hard cider to aid in washing and cleansing the Republic of the leprosed corruption of the office-holding spoilers who claim that 'to the victors belong the spoils.'" In this same issue of the Times, in the space allowed to Democrats, an account is given of the county convention held at the Grand River Exchange, May 21. A list of delegates is here given as showing the active leaders of the Democratic party of the county at that time. They were: Kent—G. Coggeshall, C. L. Walker, A. Dikeman, N. H. Finney, S. Withey, E. W. Davis, J. Morrison, J. Almy, S. Granger, G. Surprenant, T. Minihan,



J. W. Peirce. Byron—J. C. Abel, W. R. Godwin, J. McArthur, R. Howlett. Walker—R. Hilton, J. Scribner, G. W. Gordon, W. Palmer. Courtland—J. S. Beers. Plainfield—Z. Whitney, G. H. Gordon, J. Clark, A. D. W. Stout. Paris—J. A. Davis, D. F. Laraway, DeWitt Shoemaker, H. H. Darling, N. Shoemaker, T. Hall, Z. C. Darling, H. Green, H. Jennings, J. B. Leavitt, H. Budlong, H. Green, Jr. Vergennes—R. Robinson, G. Brown, J. Thompson, O. H. Jones, J. M. Fox, C. A. Lathrop. Ada—R. Robinson, S. Smith, I. Hill, W. L. Granger, N. Robinson, E. Robinson, R. Shoemaker, S. D. Holt, M. Sisson, P. Teeple, H. H. Ives, E. Lenon. Rix Robinson and C. I. Walker were elected as delegates to the state convention and S. M. Johnson, S. Granger, C. I. Walker, J. Morrison, and C. H. Taylor were elected as the central committee. One of the resolutions adopted read: "That we look upon the political movements of the opposition, by attempting to raise an excitement in favor of their candidates, in display of, and hurrah about log cabins and hard cider, and the singing of frivolous songs and ditties, as not only a reproach upon the character of our distinguished government, but an insult to the common sense of the people. Resolved, That we do not belong to that class; that we wash our hands of such folly; that we disclaim all sentiments in common with that party." The convention also pledged a majority of not less than 300 for Democracy. With such warmth at the start, it may well be believed that the struggle grew furious before election day came. Roosters and hickory poles were the emblems of Democracy in this campaign, and coon skins, log cabins, and hard cider were the emblems of the Whigs. There were many important meetings in Kent County, and all the leading lights of the Grand Rapids Lyceum, a local debating society, took the stump for their respective parties. Free feasts featured the campaign, and not a little whiskey is said to have been used to flavor the hard cider. The Van Buren administration was literally swept out of existence, and the Whig partisans retired to winter quarters to dream of the two dollars a day and roast beef that awaited them under Harrison's administration. Kent County voted as follows: Van Buren, 320; Harrison, 319! Mr. Birney, the Abolition candidate, seems to have received no votes in the county.

Much interest was taken in politics in 1844, Henry Clay being the Whig Presidential candidate against James K. Polk, Democrat. The Democrats of Michigan were greatly disappointed that the Democratic nomination did not come to Lewis Cass. The Whigs formed an enthusiastic Clay Club, and the Democrats had a "vigilance committee," with members in each precinct, and rallied to the standard of "Young Hickory." The election was a Democratic victory, the vote being: Polk, 564; Clay, 476. The Democratic majority in Michigan was 3,466, and the vote for Birney, Abolitionist candidate for President, was 3,632. This particularly angered the Whigs, who felt that had the Abolitionists voted with them, they would have been successful.

In the Presidential contest of 1848, a convention of Free-Soilers, held at Buffalo, N. Y., placed in nomination a candidate for the Presidency and adopted a chart of principles satisfactory to nearly all the Abolitionists and to many others of the old parties. This new



party was a growing affair. The campaign was fought on the issues of the Mexican War, but the slavery question was becoming more prominent, Rhode Island having joined Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and other states in declaring that all slaves should be free upon setting foot on their soil. Zachariah Chandler, of Detroit, made his first speech in Grand Rapids, this year, in support of the Whigs, and Charles E. Stuart, of Kalamazoo, was the leading Democratic orator. These political meetings were the largest that had been held in the valley, and for the first time the Free Democrats held a convention at the court house, placing nominees for county offices in the field. While the village of Grand Rapids gave a Whig plurality of 24, the vote of the county was as follows: Taylor, Whig, 653; Cass, Democrat, 768; Van Buren, Free Soil, 337. In the village the vote was: Whig, 183; Democrat, 159; Free Soil, 70. The fact that Cass was the idol of Michigan Democrats made them very bitter toward the Free-Soilers, to whom they laid their defeat and the triumphant election of Zachariah Taylor. This was the last successful stand of the Whigs, and the following year their newly elected President proved short lived, as did President Harrison, and Fillmore proved as unpopular with his party as Tyler.

In 1852 Lewis Cass was again the candidate of Michigan Democrats for the Presidential nomination. His chief opponents were James Buchanan and Stephen A. Douglas. Pierce, of New Hampshire, was later brought forward, and he was suddenly nominated, just as Polk had been eight years before. The Whigs nominated Gen. Winfield Scott, who had made a great reputation in the Mexican war. While greatly disappointed, the Michigan Democrats rallied to the cause of Pierce with remarkable unanimity, and the campaign, while not so spectacular as the Harrison campaign, was hard fought on both sides. The slavery question was becoming more and more prominent. The National Democrats resolved "that Congress has no power under the Constitution to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several states, and that such states are the sole and proper judges of everything appertaining to their own affairs, not prohibited by the Constitution. That all efforts of the Abolitionists or others made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery or to take incipient steps in relation thereto are calculated to lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences, and that all such efforts have the inevitable tendency to diminish the happiness of the people and endanger the stability of the Union, and ought not to be countenanced by any friends of our political institutions." The platform urged support of the compromises of the Constitution and the upholding of the Fugitive Slave Law. The Whig platform was almost as unsatisfactory to those who were opposed to slavery, and while supporting the ticket the great Horace Greeley said of the platform: "The plank evidently means to cover all questions relative to slavery in this country as perilous and wrong. But this is alike futile and preposterous—we defy it, execrate it, spit upon it." Thompson Sinclair, A. Worden, and J. W. Nelson headed the Democratic association of Kent County, but party lines were forgotten when announcement was made of the death of the great Henry Clay. A public meeting was held at which Capt. A. X. Cary presided and suitable



resolutions of respect were passed. The Hollanders had been long enough in this country to have acquired a taste for civil as well as religious liberty, but the pastors of the flock wished to dictate to them. This was resented by many and called forth a letter from Rev. P. Tonne, of which the following is an extract: "Your clergy represents Moses and your elders are the justices of the peace, according to Deuteronomy first. They are the only ones in the straight line from Moses. It is the right of your minister to preside at your political meetings; it is his right to require you that you should elect him supervisor of your town, and other wise men belonging to the consistory to the other town offices. I only wanted to observe to you that your church government had, according to Deuteronomy first, the right to compel you to this choice." Prior to this time, the Holland vote had been with the Whigs, but in the revolt from this arbitrary dictation, and dissatisfaction with the failure of the national government to appropriate for harbor improvements, many of the Dutch voted the Democratic ticket for the first time. There was a lively contest for the control of the Democratic caucuses, and it was claimed that Whigs and boys voted at the Democratic meetings, and that one of the Democratic state delegates was a Whig. The Democrats held a grand ratification meeting, with Samuel Clark, of Kalamazoo, as the speaker, and later a mass meeting, which was addressed by no less men than Senator Lewis Cass, ex-Gov. Alpheus Felch, and Governor McClelland. The Whigs responded with pole raisings, one on the west side of the river being the gift of I. L. and J. W. Phillips and S. White, Jr. Messrs. Church, Taylor, Sinclair, Holmes, Godfroy, Clancy, and others were the Democratic campaign orators, holding meetings in almost every precinct. At the Grand Rapids meeting, which was the culmination of their campaign, the speakers occupied the platform which had been built for the Whig meeting. This platform fell while Senator Cass was speaking and Cass is quoted as shouting when the crash came: "The Democrats may fall, but Democratic principles never." Senator Cass finished his speech, standing in a wagon. The Whig flag floated at the foot of Monroe street and beneath its folds Zachariah Chandler, the Whig candidate for Governor, destined to be one of the strongest supporters of the Union cause, and a man whom Michigan delights to honor, made his second political address in Grand Rapids. The result of the election was a sweeping Democratic victory in nation, state, and county. The vote of Kent County on the national ticket was 1,519 for Pierce and 1,221 for Scott. The strength of the Free-Soil party in Grand Rapids was 48 and in the county 166, a considerable loss from the vote of four years before. The Democratic majority in the state was about 8,000. Between this and the quadrennial election following the very name and machinery of the Whig party had passed out of existence.

The new constitution provided for biennial elections, and there was no election in the fall of 1853. There was, however, no cessation in the effort of Whigs, Free-Soil Democrats, and Abolitionists to unite, and it was in the following year that the Republican party was born, in Michigan. At the state election in 1854, for governor, Kinsley S. Bingham (Republican) received 1,540 votes, and John S. Barry (Democrat), 1,493 votes. The majority of the Republican ticket was



elected, although the plurality for Mr. Bingham was not large. This was the first instance in the political history of Kent County when the regular nominees of the Democrat party were entirely overthrown in a strictly party contest.

1856—James Buchanan (Dem.), 2,516 votes; John C. Fremont (Rep.), 2,931. Majority for Fremont over Buchanan, 415. Kent County, it will be observed, gave a heavy vote for the Republican ticket, increasing its vote of two years before by more than ninety per cent.

1860—This contest resulted ultimately in the termination of the "irrepressible conflict" between the Free and the Slave states, as Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward had declared several years previous that it was destined to become, and, so far as law could make it so, placed the former master and slave on terms of civil equality. Kent county sustained her Republican majority, giving to Lincoln (Rep.) a vote of 3,647, and to Douglas (Dem.) a vote of 2,540, making the majority for Lincoln over the vote of his chief competitor, 1,107.

1864—Lincoln's (Rep.) vote, 3,398; McClellan's (Dem.), 2,966.

1868—Ulysses S. Grant (Rep.), 5,412 votes, and Horatio Seymour (Dem.), 3,839, resulting in a majority for Grant of 1,573.

1872—At the November election of this year, Grant received a majority of 2,828 votes over Greeley, thus proving conclusively that the latter was not very popular with Kent County Democrats. The vote stood: Grant, 5,917; Greeley, 3,089. Indeed the candidacy of Mr. Greeley seems to have effected the vote for Governor also, for in 1870 the Republicans had but 225 majority in the county for Governor, and in 1872 they had 2,657.

1876—Hayes (Rep.), 7,403; Tilden (Dem.), 5,678.

1880—Garfield (Rep.), 8,313; Hancock (Dem.), 5,115.

1884—Blaine (Rep.), 9,007; Cleveland (Dem.), 6,902.

1888—Harrison (Rep.), 12,810; Cleveland (Dem.), 11,865.

1892—Harrison (Rep.), 12,388; Cleveland (Dem.), 11,533.

1896—McKinley (Rep.), 17,054; Bryan (Dem.), 13,584.

1900—McKinley (Rep.), 17,891; Bryan (Dem.), 13,794.

1904—Roosevelt (Rep.), 20,266; Parker (Dem.), 6,425.

1908—Taft (Rep.), 16,663; Bryan (Dem.), 11,494.

1912—Roosevelt (Prog.), 13,617; Wilson (Dem.), 9,437; Taft (Rep.), 6,538.

1916—Wilson (Dem.), 20,364; Hughes (Rep.), 16,095.

The figures of 1904 represent the largest majority ever given to a political party in Kent County. And, though there can be no doubt that the Republicans have a comfortable majority in the county, the Presidential election of 1904 is not a fair criterion by which to judge its size. It is but stating a truth in history to say that Mr. Parker was not a popular candidate with the "rank and file" of the Democratic party, and especially was this true after he exhibited his weak conception of the coinage question. With such an independent character as Mr. Roosevelt in the field, many Democrats considered it an opportune time to consign Mr. Parker, "irrevocably," to the shades of political oblivion. As a further evidence of this fact, notwithstanding the great majority for Roosevelt, the vote for Governor in the same year was as follows: Warner (Rep.), 12,961; Ferris (Dem.), 14,536, a Democratic majority of 1,575.



It will be seen, in the statistics given, that since 1852 the Republican candidate in Presidential years has carried the county, with the exceptions of the years 1912 and 1916, and that the Democratic vote reached high-water mark in the last named year, when it registered 20,364. The vote given to Mr. Wilson was considered the greatest achievement that has ever been accomplished by the Democrats of Kent County.

In local and state affairs, however, an independent spirit has been manifested more or less ever since the close of the Civil War. The voters of the county have been generally given to "scratching" their tickets, and it has been difficult to estimate results, particularly as regards candidates for county offices, until the votes have been officially canvassed, and members of the minority party have frequently been incumbents of official positions. In 1878, the Greenback candidate for Governor received a plurality of 385 votes in the county, and the opposition to the Republicans was also successful in the state elections of 1882, 1884, 1886, 1890, 1904, 1908, 1912, and 1914. With these exceptions, however, the Republican candidates for Governor have carried the county at every election from and including 1854.

The writer has attempted to perfect an official list of Kent County, including national, state, and county officers, from the admission of Michigan to statehood to 1918, and also to include with the list, biographical matter concerning some of the gentlemen who have borne the official honors. In some instances the favored ones have passed away, leaving neither "kith nor kin" to preserve their records, while in others, either from indisposition, churlishness, cupidity, ignorance, or some other cause those who could have done so have manifested no disposition to assist with the desired information. Notwithstanding these difficulties, considerable information is here presented concerning residents of Kent County who have held official honors. For court judges and officers, see chapter on Courts and Lawyers, and the biographical department of this work also contains additional information.

**United States Senators**—From May 10, 1894, to Jan. 23, 1895, John Patton; 1907, William Alden Smith, present incumbent.

John Patton was born at Curwensville, Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, Oct. 30, 1850. His preparation for college was at the Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., after which he entered Yale College, in which he was graduated in 1875. After his graduation he traveled in Europe for three months and then entered the Columbia Law School of New York, where he was graduated in 1878. He then came to Grand Rapids, entering the law office of Stuart & Sweet. Later he was with the firm of Hughes, O'Brien & Smiley until he opened an office for himself, in 1879. He was one of the organizers of the People's Savings Bank, and for a long time was one of its board of directors. In 1884 he was made a member of the Republican State Central Committee, and for two years he was president of the Michigan League of Republican Clubs. On May 5, 1894, Mr. Patton was appointed United States Senator from Michigan by Gov. John T. Rich, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Stockbridge. He served in this position until his successor was elected, in January,

1895. On Oct. 1, 1885, Mr. Patton was married to Miss Frances Foster, of Grand Rapids, daughter of Hon. Wilder D. Foster, who represented the Grand Rapids district in Congress in 1871-2. Mr. Patton died of heart failure at his home in Grand Rapids, May 24, 1907.

**Lieutenant-Governor**—From 1881 to 1885, Moreau S. Crosby.

Moreau S. Crosby was born in the town of Manchester, Ontario County, New York, Dec. 2, 1839. He graduated at the University of Rochester in 1863. He first came to Michigan in 1857, and settled in Grand Rapids. He was a member of the board of education of the city for four years, was for several years trustee of the Kalamazoo College, was president of the Young Men's State Christian Association, and was for some years a member of the State Board of Charities. He was engaged in the real estate and insurance business, as a member of the long established firm of I. S. Crosby & Company. He was elected to the State Senate in 1872 and served one term. Mr. Crosby was elected Lieutenant-Governor in 1880, and was re-elected to the same office in 1882, having been nominated in both instances by acclamation.

**Secretaries of State**—From 1851 to 1853, Charles H. Taylor; 1875 to 1879, Ebenezer G. D. Holden.

Charles H. Taylor was born at Cooperstown, N. Y., Nov. 20, 1813. He was educated at an academy and came to Grand Rapids in 1837. He was clerk of Kent County for eight years, and in 1847-8 was a Representative in the Legislature. He was one of five commissioners who selected sites for the insane asylum at Kalamazoo and the deaf and dumb asylum at Flint. He was the first Secretary of State elected under the constitution of 1850, and served from 1851 to 1853. From 1847 to 1855 he edited the Grand Rapids Enquirer, and later he was chief editor and part proprietor of the Detroit Free Press, but ill health compelled him to retire. In politics he was a Democrat, and continued his residence at Grand Rapids until his death, in 1889.

Ebenezer G. D. Holden was born Feb. 18, 1834, in a pioneer's cabin at Kirkland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. His life, until he became to his majority, was that of a pioneer boy, his father moving from Ohio to Illinois while the son was yet an infant, and after various shiftings, incident to "wild-cat" times and business failures, finally became a settler in the township of Byron, Kent County, in 1845. The son at the age of seventeen left home to care for himself. He learned the trade of a carpenter, qualified himself for college, and was a student in Knox College, Illinois, for two and a half years. He studied law and was admitted to the Kent County bar in 1859. In 1862 he was elected prosecuting attorney of Kent County and filled that position four years. For six years he was chairman of the Kent County Republican Committee, and for many years a school officer and trustee of Grand Rapids. In 1869 he, with his partner, organized the Grand Rapids Savings Bank, the first in the city. In 1874 he was elected Secretary of State and was re-elected in 1876, serving four years. He was always a Republican.

**Auditor-General**—From Jan. 28, 1846, to May 9, 1848, Digby V. Bell.



Digby V. Bell was born Nov. 10, 1784, on the Island of St. Christopher, British West Indies. His father, a retired British naval officer and merchant, died when he was five years old. Under the care of an accomplished mother, he received every educational advantage the island afforded. At the age of thirteen, from choice, he became a sailor, and followed that life for six years. Abandoning that occupation, he acted as agent of a mining company in New York City, afterwards of the New York Gas Light Company. Following the tide of emigration he came to Michigan in 1834, settling in St. Joseph County as a farmer. In a few months he was discharging the functions of seven offices, took an active part in the organization of a state government, and issued the first address to the citizens of St. Joseph County. He was elected judge of probate, and held other important offices. During the "wild-cat" period he was State Bank Commissioner, and in that capacity helped to protect the people from frauds. Having removed to Ada, he was elected Senator in the Legislature of 1842 and 1843, and was Representative in 1840 from Kent County. As chairman of the finance committee, he made an exhaustive report on the indebtedness of the state, its credits, revenues, and expenditures, which had great weight in preventing repudiation. He was Commissioner of the State Land Office from 1844 to 1846, and Auditor-General from 1846 to 1848. Afterward, for several years, he was cashier of the Michigan Central Railroad Company. In 1850, he established in Chicago the first commercial college in Illinois, which he continued for several years. Then going to New York City, he became interested in a banking house which suspended in the crash of 1857, but resumed and paid off all liabilities. He returned to Chicago in 1858, and was there interested with Bryant & Stratton in the Chicago Commercial College, which became one of the first in the country. He was soon appointed by the Legislature of Illinois commissioner of claims, and charged with the duty of investigating the finances of the city of Chicago. He was also special agent of the postoffice department, and discharged its duties with great fidelity. He sent four sons to the war during the rebellion, three of whom served until peace was declared. He removed to Battle Creek, Mich., and died while serving as postmaster, Oct. 28, 1871. He was a man of great ability, and discharged the many varied trusts committed to his hands with signal success. His sense of justice in life, both public and private, was shown when, coming into possession of his father's property at the age of twenty-one, he gave fourteen slaves their freedom, and divided the estate into small farms, giving each a deed to a part of the estate. In politics he was a Democrat until 1854, then a Republican.

**Commissioner of State Land Office**—From Feb. 2, 1844, to Feb. 16, 1846, Digby V. Bell.

**Regents of the University**—From 1864 to 1876, Thomas D. Gilbert; from Jan. 19 to Dec. 31, 1883, Lyman D. Norris.

Thomas D. Gilbert, Representative from Kent County in 1861-2, and regent of the university for twelve years, was born at Greenfield, Mass., Dec. 13, 1815, and was there educated. After five years' service as a clerk, he engaged in the lumber business at Grand Haven, Mich., in 1835, and was a pioneer in that business. He served as



sheriff of Ottawa County. He removed to Grand Rapids in 1858, and there resided until his death. He served several years on the board of education, was five years president of the board of public works, and at the time of his death was president of the National City Bank, a position he had held since 1865.

Lyman D. Norris was born at Covington, N. Y., May 4, 1825. His father removed to Ypsilanti in 1828. The son, after a preparatory education, entered as the first student of the first class of the Michigan University. After nearly three years there he entered Yale College, and graduated in 1845. He read law with A. D. Frazer, of Detroit, and was admitted in 1847. In 1848 he removed to St. Louis, Mo., and engaged in practice. He subsequently studied civil law at Heidelberg, Germany. In 1852 he was retained in the famous Dred Scott case, and effected a reversal of former decisions of the Supreme Court of Missouri. In 1854 he returned to Ypsilanti and practiced there until 1871, and then removed to Grand Rapids, where he became a prominent lawyer. He was a member of the constitutional convention of 1867, and in 1869-70 was Senator from Washtenaw County. He was the Democratic candidate for supreme judge in 1875, and in 1883 was appointed regent of the university to succeed Byron M. Cutcheon, resigned. He was a man of superior education and attainments.

**Members of Congress**—From 1843 to 1845, Lucius Lyon; 1859 to 1865, Francis W. Kellogg; 1871 to 1873, Wilder D. Foster; 1877 to 1881, John W. Stone; 1883 to 1885, Julius ouseman; 1885 to 1887, Charles C. Comstock; 1887 to 1889, Melbourne H. Ford; 1889 to 1893, Charles E. Belknap; 1895 to 1907, William Alden Smith; 1911 to 1913, Edwin F. Sweet; 1913 to 1919, Carl E. Mapes, present incumbent.

Francis W. Kellogg was born in Worthington, Mass., May 30, 1810. He received a limited education and, removing to Michigan, entered into the business of lumbering at Kelloggsville, Kent County. As a Republican he was elected to the Legislature of 1857. In 1858 he was elected to the thirty-sixth Congress as Representative from the Third district of Michigan, and was re-elected in 1860 and 1862, serving from 1859 to 1865. During the rebellion he raised six cavalry regiments for the service. In 1865 President Johnson appointed him collector of internal revenue, for Alabama, and he was afterward elected to Congress from that State.

Wilder D. Foster, member of Congress from 1871 to 1873, was born in Monroe, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1821. He became a blacksmith and a resident of Marshall, Mich., and then of Grand Rapids. In 1845 he entered into the hardware trade at Grand Rapids, and was ultimately the largest dealer in that line in the Grand River Valley. He served as alderman, treasurer and mayor of Grand Rapids, and was Senator in 1855. He was a Republican in politics and he had the respect and esteem of everybody. He died Sept. 20, 1873.

John W. Stone, Representative in Congress from 1877 to 1881, was born in Wadsworth, Ohio, July 18, 1838. He received a common and select school education, came to Michigan in 1856, and taught school four winters. He was clerk of Allegan County two terms. He studied law, was admitted to the bar, and was prosecuting attorney of



Allegan County from 1865 to 1871. He was elected circuit judge in 1873, resigned in 1874, and entered into practice at Grand Rapids. After the close of his second term in Congress he was United States district attorney for Western Michigan until 1885, and later he removed to Houghton, Mich. He is now a member of the Supreme Court of Michigan.

Julius Houseman was born in Zeckendorf, Bavaria, Germany, Dec. 8, 1832. He received a common school education and commercial training in his native town. Mr. Houseman emigrated to the United States in 1851, and engaged in mercantile pursuits until 1876, twenty-four years in the city of Grand Rapids, and after that time was principally occupied in the manufacture of lumber. He served eight years as alderman, and two terms as mayor of Grand Rapids. He was a Representative in the Legislature in 1871-2. He was the candidate for Lieutenant-Governor on the Democratic ticket in 1876. He was elected to the United States Congress in 1882, on the Union ticket, receiving 16,725 votes to 16,609 for his Republican competitor, William O. Webster, and 336 for William H. Taylor, Greenback.

Charles C. Comstock was born at Sullivan, N. H., March 5, 1818, and was brought up on a farm, receiving a common school education. In 1842 he engaged in the lumber business and soon owned several saw-mills. In 1853 he removed to Grand Rapids and engaged in the same business. In 1857 he bought a furniture factory and failed, but in the next four years paid his debts and, in 1862, inaugurated the first successful wholesale furniture business in Grand Rapids. He sold out to his sons in 1865, but continued the lumber business and the manufacture of pails, sashes, blinds and doors. He also owned several farms, and was always a leading business man of Grand Rapids. In 1863-4 he was mayor of Grand Rapids, in 1870 Democratic candidate for Governor, and in 1872 and 1878 Democratic candidate for Congress. He served as member of Congress from the Fifth district in 1885-6, but declined a renomination in 1886.

Melbourne H. Ford was born in Saline, Mich., June 30, 1849. He was educated at the Michigan Agricultural College and at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. He served in the navy during the latter part of the War of the Rebellion, then studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1878, but never engaged in the practice. He was official stenographer in several Michigan courts, beginning in 1874; was a member of the Michigan Legislature in 1885-86, and was elected to the Fiftieth Congress as a Democrat, receiving 18,567 votes against 18,120 votes for George W. McBride, Republican; 3,086 votes for Edward L. Briggs, Prohibitionist, and 3 votes scattering. Defeated for re-election in 1888, he was again nominated in 1890, and was elected by a large majority, but died suddenly on April 20, 1891, before the assembling of the new Congress.

**State Senators**—Sessions of 1840 and 1841, Henry P. Bridge; 1842-43, Digby V. Bell; 1844-45, William A. Richmond; 1846-47-48-49, Rix Robinson; 1853, Truman H. Lyon; 1855, Wilder D. Foster; 1857-58, Smith Lapham; 1859, Lewis Porter; 1861-62, Solomon L. Withey; 1863-64-65, Milton C. Watkins; 1867, Henry Seymour; 1869-70, Peter R. L. Peirce; 1871-72, Byron D. Ball; 1873-74, Moreau

S. Crosby; 1875, Lyman Murray; 1877, Wesley P. Andrus; 1879, Milton B. Hine; 1881-82, Henry C. Russell; 1883, James W. Hine; 1885, John L. Curtis; 1887, George P. Stark; 1889, Sybrant Wesselius; 1891-92-93, Peter Doran; 1893-95-97-98, Edmund M. Barnard; 1895, Julius M. Jamison; 1897-98-99-00-01, Robert B. Loomis; 1899-00, Robert D. Graham; 1901-03, Augustus W. Weeks; 1903, David E. Burns; 1905-07, Andrew Fyfe and Huntley Russell; 1909-11, Horace T. Barnaby, Jr., and Carl E. Mapes; 1913, Thomas H. McNaughton; 1913-15, Leonard D. Verdier; 1915, John Paul; 1917, Anson R. Harrington and Harry C. White.

Henry P. Bridge was born at Littleton, Mass., in 1808. He came to Michigan in 1836 and settled at Grand Rapids, then called Kent. He was elected State Senator and served in that capacity in 1840-1. Meeting with pecuniary reverses, he went to Detroit in 1845, and formed the commission house of Bridge & Lewis, with Alexander Lewis for partner. This house became the leading one in that line of business in the State. He was the first president of the Detroit Board of Trade, in 1856, and held that position three years, and on his retirement was elected a life member of the board. He was for several years collector at Detroit and was so universally esteemed by all that he received the nomination to the office of mayor, both from the Democratic and the Republican parties. He was in politics a Democrat. He died Jan. 20, 1884.

William A. Richmond was born at Aurora, N. Y., Jan. 28, 1808. He was brought up on a farm, educated at Cayuga Academy, was for two years a clerk in Geneseo, and in 1828 visited Michigan. He was two years clerk in a New York silk house, and two years in business for himself. In 1836 he settled at Grand Rapids, and with Charles H. Carroll, Lucius Lyon and John Almy purchased the "Kent plat." In 1836 he was a member of the first convention of assent, in 1838 was appointed receiver of the Ionia land district, in 1844 and 1845 was Senator, in 1845 became Superintendent of Indian Affairs under President Polk, and in 1851 was the Democratic candidate for Lieutenant-Governor. He was twice brigadier-general of the State militia, and for several years was director of the Michigan Southern Railroad. In politics he was a Democrat and in religion an Episcopalian. He was a man of clear intellect and sound judgment. He died at Grand Rapids in 1870.

Rix Robinson, Senator from Kent and attached counties in 1846-7-8-9, was born in Cayuga County, New York, in 1792, and died in 1875. He became an Indian trader in the Grand River Valley in 1821, and was the first white settler in Kent County. He established several trading posts, the central one at Ada, where he died. When lands were opened for settlement he became a farmer. In 1887 a monument was erected to his memory in Ada. He was supervisor, associate judge, delegate in the constitutional convention of 1850, and commissioner of internal improvements in 1846. In politics he was a Democrat.

Truman H. Lyon was born at Shelburne, Vt., Feb. 24, 1801. He had the advantages of common schools, learned the business of a cloth dresser, and carried on that business at Hopkinton, N. Y. He was early a justice of the peace. In 1836 he came to Lyons, Mich.,



where he kept hotel, was justice, side judge, and held other local offices. He was also in United States employ and was superintendent of lighthouses on Lake Michigan, and let the contracts for their construction. He moved to Grand Rapids in 1840, and there kept hotel and was a merchant, and for many years postmaster. He was Senator in 1853. He was a leading business man and prominent Mason. He died Sept. 14, 1872.

Lewis Porter, Representative in 1857-8, and Senator from Kent County in 1859, was born in the State of New York, Nov. 4, 1823. He came to Michigan in 1838. He was engaged in the clothing trade at Grand Rapids, and was an active Republican in politics. Among other positions he was assistant postmaster at Washington, D. C., and was the first clerk of the United States District Court for Western Michigan. He died Jan. 10, 1882.

Solomon L. Withey was born at St. Albans, Vt., April 21, 1820. His father, Solomon Withey, known to early residents of Michigan as General Withey, emigrated to Grand Rapids in 1836 with his family. Mr. Withey received a common school and academical education, and in 1839 entered the law office of Rathbone & Martin. He was admitted to the bar in 1843, and engaged in active practice for nineteen years. His career at the bar was one that gave him the unlimited confidence of his clients, and he acquired a competence. His cool judgment, perfect integrity and high character as a man, and thorough knowledge of the law, made him prominent. From 1848 to 1852 he was judge of probate of Kent County, Senator from 1861 to 1863, and member of the State constitutional convention of 1867. Both in the Senate and in that convention he was chairman of the committee on the judiciary. In 1863 he was appointed by President Lincoln, United States District Judge for the Western District of Michigan, a position he filled with signal ability until his death, which occurred at San Diego, Cal., April 25, 1886. He married Marion L. Hinsdill, in 1846, and left five children—four sons and one daughter. In 1869 he was tendered the position of United States Circuit Judge for the States of Ohio, Michigan, Tennessee and Kentucky, which he declined. He was director and president of the First National Bank of Grand Rapids for many years. He was a Republican in politics, and a consistent member of the Congregational Church. His courts were models of propriety and decorum.

Milton C. Watkins, Representative in 1859, and Senator in 1863-4-5, from Kent County, was born in Rutland, Vt., in 1806. He received a common school and academical education. After the age of eighteen he was engaged several years in teaching. In 1830 he married Susan Joy, and settled on a farm in Covington, N. Y., where he taught winters, and worked as a carpenter summers, and was also justice and school inspector. In 1844 he settled on a farm in Grattan township, where he resided until his death, May 16, 1886. He was the first supervisor of Grattan, and held that and the office of justice nearly twenty-five years. He was United States assistant assessor until the office was abolished. In politics he was a Whig until 1854 and then a Republican.

Henry Seymour was born at Camillus, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1821. He came to Grand Rapids in 1842 and there resided until his death, June 7, 1877. He was engaged in wool buying. In politics he was a Re-



publican. He was a prominent officer in the Congregational Church and Sabbath School at Grand Rapids. He was a Representative in 1865, and Senator in 1867.

Peter R. L. Peirce, Senator from Kent County in 1869-70, was born in Geneseo, N. Y., May 25, 1823. As a boy he attended common schools, but in 1836 came to Detroit, there attending night schools and reading law. In 1840 he removed to Grand Rapids and kept a book store, reading law with Judge Martin. From 1843 to 1850 he was in the mercantile business at Cincinnati, Ohio, and wrote a history of the Sons of Temperance, which had a circulation of 100,000 copies, and he also wrote for several papers. From 1850 to 1857 he was a merchant at Grand Rapids. In 1854 he was city clerk, mayor in 1873-5-6, several terms clerk of Kent County, and postmaster at Grand Rapids from 1877 until his death, about 1880. In politics he was a Republican. He was a man of wit and humor, kind and genial, and few men had warmer friends or better deserved them.

Byron D. Ball was born in Rochester, N. Y., July 19, 1834. His father, David Ball, came to Michigan in 1835 and founded the city of Owosso. In 1840 he removed with his family to Grand Rapids. In 1851 the son was apprenticed to learn the machinist trade with Ball & McCray of Grand Rapids. He served two years at the trade. He married in 1854, and in 1855 bought a half interest in the shop in which he had been employed, and carried on the business two years. In 1857 he commenced the study of law and in 1859 entered the law department of the State University, and graduated in the class of 1861. He commenced practice in Grand Rapids, and was prosecuting attorney of Kent County nearly four years. In 1871-2 he was State Senator and was chairman of the committee on railroads. He was elected Attorney-General of Michigan in 1872 and served in 1873 and up to April 1, 1874, when he resigned on account of ill health. He built a block of stores at Grand Rapids and was interested with his father in other enterprises. He was a man of large stature, compactly built, of immense strength, and one of the best amateur boxers ever seen on the university grounds. He was genial, jovial, kind hearted and popular, and had many warm friends. In politics he was a Republican. He died in February, 1876.

Lyman Murray, Senator from Kent County in 1875, was born in 1820, in New York. He received a common school education, removed to Michigan in 1845, and settled in Kent County. He was supervisor, and a Representative in the Legislatures of 1867-69, also a member of the constitutional convention of 1867. His occupation was farming and his politics was Republican.

Wesley P. Andrus, Senator from Kent County in 1877, was born Feb. 19, 1834, in the town of Potter, Yates County, New York. He followed farming until attaining his majority. He was educated at Franklin Academy and Geneseo College, N. Y. He removed to Michigan in 1856, and here, up to the time of the breaking out of the Civil War, was principally engaged in teaching school. In 1861 he entered the Forty-second Illinois infantry, was commissioned first lieutenant about two months after his enlistment, and was promoted to captain for meritorious service at Stone's River. At the battle of Missionary Ridge he was severely wounded, and was discharged on account of



disability in May, 1864. At the close of the war he engaged in mercantile business in Michigan, and for a number of years was a hardware merchant at Cedar Springs. He was for four years a member of its common council and also served as president of that village. In politics he was a Republican.

Milton B. Hine, Senator from Kent County in 1879, was born at Meredith, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1828, and there resided until 1847, when he removed to Cannon township, and there spent the remainder of his life. He received a common school and academic education. He was always a farmer and held the position of president and treasurer of the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Kent County for many years. In politics he was a Greenbacker.

Henry C. Russell, Senator from Kent County in 1881-2, was born in Plainfield, Mich., in 1842. He received a common school education, resided in Grand Rapids several years, became a merchant in 1864 at Cedar Springs, and afterward was a druggist. He was also extensively engaged in lumbering in Lake County, and in banking and farming. He served as supervisor, town treasurer and as president of the village.

James W. Hine, Senator from Kent County in 1883, was born in West Meredith, N. Y., in 1846. He received an academical education, served in the army, and settled at Lowell in 1867. He was three years in the drug trade and then purchased an interest in the Lowell Journal, becoming editor, and in 1873 sole proprietor. He removed to Detroit after his Senatorial term and became one of the editors of the Detroit Tribune.

John L. Curtiss, Senator from Kent County in 1885, was born at Brooklyn, Conn., in 1835. He received a liberal education at Lima Seminary, and at the age of nineteen taught school. The money he thus realized he expended in a thorough course of instruction at Bryant & Stratton's Commercial College in Buffalo. He came west to Milwaukee, Wis., where he was married in 1865. Leaving there soon afterward he took a position as traveling salesman for a Chicago wholesale house and remained so employed five years. In 1871 he started a paper and oil house in Grand Rapids, and became the head of the extensive wholesale house of Curtiss, Dunton & Co. Mr. Curtiss was elected to the office of alderman for the First ward in 1878, and served two years. He was elected Senator on the Fusion ticket by a vote of 10,007 to 8,854 for Horace T. Barnaby, Republican, and 1,097 for J. H. Maynard, Prohibitionist.

George P. Stark, Senator from Kent County in 1887, was born at Stow, Ohio, Aug. 19, 1832, and received a common school education, with a term or two at Hiram College. He learned the trade of a cooper and followed it until 1853, when he became a farmer. He was for one year, 1866, in the drug trade at Palestine, Ill., and then was a farmer until 1871, when he removed from Hudson, Ohio, to Cascade township, where he became a merchant and farmer. He was a Representative in 1885. In politics he was a Fusionist.

Peter Doran was born in London, Canada, April 16, 1848. He was of Irish descent, his parents coming from Belfast, Ireland. He acquired a common school education and began life as wheelsman and clerk on vessels on the Great Lakes. He afterward taught school,



managed a general store, studied medicine for a time, and finally began privately the study of law. He was admitted to the bar and began practice in Detroit, in 1872. Four years later he moved to Grand Rapids, where he continued in the practice of his profession. In politics he was a Democrat, and he served as a member of the Democratic county, Congressional and State committees, and for a number of years was chairman of the city committee. He was a member of the Senate of 1891-2 and 1893-4.

Edmund M. Barnard was born in Hudson, N. Y., May 28, 1860, and came to Michigan with his parents at the close of the Civil War, locating on a farm near Grand Rapids on the banks of Reed's Lake. His education was obtained in the public schools at Olivet College. In connection with farming he engaged in the real estate and insurance business, becoming a member of the insurance firm of L. K. Bishop & Co. In politics he was a Republican; was elected to the House of Representatives in 1890; was a member of the Senate of 1893-4, and was elected to that of 1895-6 by a majority of nearly 3,500. He took an important part in matters of legislation; was the author of the joint resolution committing this State to the election of United States Senators by popular vote; was instrumental in restoring to the soldiers of the Michigan Soldiers' Home the right of franchise through a constitutional amendment, after it had been denied them by the courts; was instrumental in the measure requiring the vestibuling of street cars, and several other measures affecting the purification of conventions and elections; was chairman of the committee on banks and corporations during the session of 1895. He was re-elected to the Senate of 1897-8.

Julius M. Jamison was born on a farm in Wayne County, Ohio, April 30, 1854. He was educated at the Indiana Normal School, Commercial College and University of Michigan, graduating in the law department of the latter in 1880. He made three trips to Europe, writing as foreign correspondent, and in 1882 settled at Grand Rapids, where he engaged in the practice of law. In politics he was a Republican and he was a member of the Senate of 1895-6.

Robert B. Loomis was born at Newcastle, Lincoln County, Me., Sept. 25, 1832. His parents moved to Boston in 1838 and the future Senator grew up in the public schools of that city. Mr. Loomis subsequently removed to Washington, D. C., and was engaged in mercantile business in that city from 1862 to 1866, when he removed to Grand Rapids and engaged in the boot and shoe business. In 1881 he established the firm of R. B. Loomis & Co., fire insurance, which business has been continued up to the present time. Mr. Loomis served the city and county in several important positions. He was elected supervisor in 1877, and served in that office until 1896. He was chairman of the county board two terms; was several times a member of the state board of equalization, and was chairman of the building committee having the erection of the county court house in charge. In 1896 Mr. Loomis was elected to the State Senate and served on the committees on cities and villages, normal schools, insane asylums at Kalamazoo and Traverse City, public buildings, and religious and benevolent societies. Politically he was a Republican, and he was re-elected to the Senate of 1899-1900, and again to the



Senate of 1901-1902. Upon the convening of the last named body Mr. Loomis was chosen president pro tem., a position which he had also held during the session of 1899-1900.

David E. Burns was born in Coldwater, Mich. He was educated at Albion College and later graduated in the law department of the University of Michigan, in 1892, and in the fall of that year located in Grand Rapids, where he engaged in the practice of his profession. He was appointed assistant prosecuting attorney of Kent County in January, 1893, for two years, and was subsequently a member of the advisory board in the matter of pardons from June, 1899, to August, 1900, when he resigned. He was a staunch Republican and was a member of the House of Representatives of 1901-2, and was elected to the State Senate Nov. 4, 1902. Mr. Burns was the father of the first primary law ever enacted in Michigan for the nomination of candidates by a direct vote of the people, and he was nominated for the State Senate under the provisions of this statute.

Thomas H. McNaughton was born May 1, 1861, on his father's farm in Ada township. His education was acquired in the public schools. He served as master of Pomona Grange eight years and as a member of the executive committee of the State Grange for ten years. He also served as president of the Kent County farmers' institute. He served as a member of the legislative committee of the State Grange for three years, and for nine years was a member of the Ada high school board. Mr. McNaughton was a Republican and was always active in the political affairs of the State and county. He was elected to the Legislature of 1909-10 and was re-elected Nov. 8, 1910, serving two terms. He was elected to the Senate Nov. 5, 1912.

John Paul was born at Whithorn, Wigtonshire, Scotland, April 1, 1849. He was educated in the district schools. While he was quite young, his parents located on a farm near Reed's Lake, where he later assisted his father in the rough work of clearing the land, attending school during the winter. During his entire active career he was engaged in farming and in the real estate and insurance business. He served as school trustee, village president, trustee, justice of the peace, supervisor and county treasurer. He was a Republican and was elected to the Senate Nov. 3, 1914. He died before the expiration of his term, July 23, 1915.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### REPRESENTATIVES AND COUNTY OFFICIALS

LIST OF REPRESENTATIVES — BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES — COUNTY CLERKS—COUNTY TREASURERS—REGISTERS OF DEEDS—SURVEYORS —LIST OF CORONERS.

**Representatives**—Sessions of 1835 and 1836, Roswell Britton; 1837, John Almy; 1838, John Ball; 1839, Noble H. Finney; 1840, Digby V. Bell; 1841, Charles I. Walker; 1843, Simeon M. Johnson; 1847-48, Charles H. Taylor; 1849, Henry C. Smith; 1850, Philo Beers; 1851, Thomas B. Church; 1853, Henry C. Smith; 1855, Thomas B.

Church and Smith Lapham; 1857-58, Volney W. Caukin, Francis W. Kellogg and Lewis Porter; 1859, George W. Allen and Milton C. Watkins; 1859-61-62, Silas S. Fallass; 1861-62, Thomas D. Gilbert and William H. Taylor; 1863-64, James Dockeray, John Porter and George H. White; 1863-64-65, Augustus D. Griswold; 1865, George W. Allen and Henry Seymour; 1865-67, Edward Jewell; 1867, Solomon O. Kingsbury; 1867-69-70, Lyman Murray and Thomas J. Slayton; 1869-70, George G. Briggs and William R. Davis; 1871-72, Asa P. Ferry, Nicholas R. Hill and Julius Houseman; 1871-72-73-74-75, Samuel M. Garfield; 1873-74, Ebenezer S. Eggleston; 1873-74-75, Edward L. Briggs and Erwin C. Watkins; 1875, James W. Ransom; 1877, Simeon L. Baldwin, Welcome W. Johnson and Clarence W. Prindle; 1877-79, Amherst B. Cheney; 1879, Henry F. McCormick, Luther V. Moulton and William H. Powers; 1881-82, Nathaniel A. Earle, Charles W. Garfield, Heman Palmerlee and Clarence W. Prindle; 1883, Niram A. Fletcher, George W. Thompson and Jarvis C. Train; 1883-85, L. McKnight Sellers; 1885, Melbourne H. Ford, George P. Stark and Madison J. Ulrich; 1887, Joseph Dillon and Leonard H. Hunt; 1887-89, John Killeen and Neal McMillan; 1889, Frank H. Gill and George E. Judd; 1891-92, Edmund M. Barnard and John W. Hayward; 1891-92-93, Norton Fitch and Arthur S. White; 1893, Jeremiah H. Anderson and William A. Tateum; 1893-95, Augustus W. Weeks; 1895, Arthur H. Chilver, Charles Holden and Joseph B. Ware; 1895-97-98, Robert D. Graham; 1897-98, Charles W. McGill; 1897-98-99-1900, Edgar J. Adams and Jeremiah H. Anderson; 1899-1900, Edmund Burfoot; 1899-1900-01, Edward P. Nash; 1901, David E. Burns; 1901-03, Horace T. Barnaby, Jr., Henry B. Vandercook and Jacob J. Van Zoeren; 1903, Jeremiah E. Anderson; 1903-05, Frank Ladner; 1905, George E. Ellis, Henry T. Heald and Carl E. Mapes; 1905-07, Cassius B. Towner; 1907, Jeremiah H. Anderson and Dennis Murray; 1907-09, Colin P. Campbell and Harry Vander Veen; 1909-11, Earl R. Stewart and Leonard D. Verdier; 1911, Paul J. Averill; 1911-13, Thaddeus B. Taylor; 1913, George R. Holloway, Benn H. Lee and Will J. Sproat; 1913-15-17, Charles R. Foote; 1915, Paul J. Averill, William DeBoer, Herbert A. Van Antwerp and Ray M. Watkins; 1917, George Welsh, Henry L. Schmidt, Joseph J. Frost and Frank W. Peterson.

Roswell Britton, Representative from Kent County in 1835-6, was born in the State of Vermont, June 16, 1789, and died June 2, 1850. He came to Michigan in 1824, settled in Kent County in 1834, and here he built a saw-mill and operated it for a number of years, when he engaged in farming. Politically he was a Democrat.

John Almy was a native of Rhode Island, and was educated as a civil engineer. He was for years a resident of Geneseo, N. Y., where he married Eliza Pierce. He came to Detroit in 1834, having been appointed city engineer, and remained there several years and laid out the system of sewers and street grades for that city. In 1835 he laid out the village of Kent, now Grand Rapids, for Lucius Lyon and N. O. Sargeant. Mr. Lyon sold out his interest to Charles H. Carroll, of Groveland, N. Y., and Mr. Almy was placed in charge. He built the first stone dwelling in Grand Rapids. In 1837 he was elected Representative to the Legislature, and he was also judge of



the county court, city engineer, engineer of the Kalamazoo and other river improvements, and chief clerk in the office of the surveyor-general. He was a man of much learning, of fine physical form and a courteous, genial gentleman. He was an Episcopalian. He died in 1863.

John Ball was born at Hebron, N. Y., Nov. 12, 1794. He had a common school and academical education, obtained by his own exertions. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1820. He studied law two years at Lansingburg, N. Y., and then went to Darien, Ga., where he taught school five years. He then returned to Lansingburg, N. Y., completed his law studies and was admitted to the bar in 1824. He continued in practice several years and then abandoned it to take charge of an oilcloth factory for his sister, and placed it in a flourishing condition. In 1832 he traveled across the continent, went to Fort Vancouver, and taught the first school ever opened in Oregon. He returned via the Sandwich Islands and Cape Horn in 1833-4. In 1837 he settled at Grand Rapids and represented Eastern capitalists in locating lands. He also opened a law office and had as partners at various times, George Martin, at one time Chief Justice of Michigan, and Solomon L. Withey, later United States District Judge. From 1852 until the death of Mr. Ball, Feb. 5, 1884, he was the senior member of the firm of Ball & McKee. In 1838, as a Democrat, he was a Representative in the Legislature from a district then comprising Clinton, Ionia, Kent and Ottawa Counties. In 1842 he was appointed by Governor Barry to select 300,000 of the 500,000 acres of land granted to Michigan by Congress for internal improvements. These were mainly selected about Grand Rapids, and were mostly taken up with internal improvement warrants, and as these warrants could be bought for about forty cents on the dollar, it resulted in a speedy settlement of the Grand River Valley. Mr. Ball was largely identified with Grand Rapids interests. He was interested in schools, geology, lyceums and all local enterprises. In politics he was a conservative Democrat.

Charles I. Walker, Representative from Kent County in 1841, was born in Butternuts, N. Y., April 25, 1814, his parents moving there from New England. He received a common and select school education. At sixteen he was a teacher, and then a clerk. At twenty-one he was a merchant at Cooperstown, N. Y., but sold out in 1836, and removed to Grand Rapids as agent for Eastern capitalists in the buying of Michigan lands. The panic of 1837 closed out land speculations, and he took an interest and became editor of the Grand River Times. He commenced the study of law, went to Vermont to complete his studies, and was admitted to the Vermont bar at Brattleboro in 1842. He practiced in that State until 1851, and then settled at Detroit. He was circuit judge for about a year, but resigned, and was professor in the law school at Ann Arbor from 1859 to 1874. He was for several years president of the Board of State Charities. He always took an active interest in the early history of the Northwest, and wrote able papers on that subject. He also served as president of the State Pioneer Society. He was an able lawyer, and politically was a Democrat. He was a member of the second convention of assent in 1836 and held several honorable local positions.

Henry C. Smith was born at Scituate, R. I., Jan. 9, 1804. He worked on a farm until of age and enjoyed fair opportunities for an education. He was a mason by trade and worked at it until 1836, when he came to Michigan. He was engaged both in merchandising and lumbering, and finally became a farmer in Plainfield, Kent County. He held various town and county offices and was a Representative in 1849 and 1853.

Philo Beers was born in Ithaca, N. Y., Feb. 8, 1801. He settled as a farmer in the township of Courtland, Kent County, in 1840. Politically he was a Democrat. He was supervisor of Courtland for twelve years, was postmaster eight years, and was Representative from Kent County in 1850, and from Grand Traverse County in 1859. He was Deputy United States Marshal under Buchanan for four years and keeper of the Traverse lighthouse four years. He died at Charlevoix, April 3, 1872. He was a Mason for fifty years.

Thomas B. Church was born in Dighton, Bristol County, Massachusetts, in September, 1821. His grandfather, Thomas Church, was a colonel in the War of the Revolution, and he was a direct descendant of Benjamin Church, who commanded in the Indian war which resulted in the death of King Philip. As a boy he was a sailor for several years, then entered Washington, now Trinity College, and graduated. He went south and engaged some years in teaching; spent one year in Cambridge Law School, then finished his studies at Marshall and commenced practice in Grand Rapids in 1843, and there he continued to reside the remainder of his life. He was prosecuting attorney of Kent County two years; member of the constitutional convention of 1850; in 1851 and 1855 Representative in the Legislature; and in 1852 mayor of Grand Rapids. He was three times the Democratic candidate for Congress in the Grand Rapids district. He married Mary E. Stuart, and his only son, Frederick S. Church, became a distinguished New York artist.

Volney W. Caukin, Representative from Kent County in 1857, was born in the State of New York, June 25, 1819. By occupation he was a farmer and land surveyor, and in politics was a Democrat until 1848, then a Free Soiler until 1854, after which he was a Republican. He held nearly all the township offices and those of county surveyor and deputy United States surveyor. He came to Macomb County in 1831, and from 1844 to 1884 was a resident of Kent County. In the last named year he became a resident of Jordan, Antrim County, where he spent the remainder of his life.

George W. Allen, member of the House for the sessions of 1859 and 1865 from Grand Rapids, was born in Enfield, Hartford County, Connecticut, Sept. 17, 1813. When three years of age he was taken by his mother (his father being dead) to the Connecticut Western Reserve, Ohio, where she settled in the town of Painesville. Mr. Allen remained in Painesville until 1853, when he, with his family, removed to Grand Rapids, where he spent the remainder of his life. The session of 1859 was noted for the passage of three important acts, viz., the act abolishing the grand jury system, the swamp land road act, and the act to encourage and develop the salt industry, by offering a bounty of ten cents per bushel on all salt manufactured in the State. Mr. Allen was chairman of the House select committee on salt. In



1866 he was appointed United States pension agent for Western Michigan. He held several important positions connected with city affairs. Politically he was a Whig as long as the Whig party existed, and thereafter was a Republican of a pronounced type. He lived as a retired merchant the later years of his life.

James Dockeray was born in Westmoreland County, England, May 1, 1815, came to this country in 1838, and settled at Albion, N. Y., where he worked at day labor and studied and practiced surveying. In 1846 he removed to Cannon township, Kent County, and settled on a farm. He was supervisor sixteen years and held other offices. He was a Representative in 1863-4. In 1874 he removed to Rockford and became the proprietor of the Exchange Bank in that place. He served one term as county surveyor. In politics he was a Democrat until 1856, after which he became a Republican.

John Porter was born in Tompkins County, New York, in 1819. He came to Michigan in 1838, settled in Montcalm County in 1845, and on the organization of that county was elected county treasurer, holding the position four years. By occupation he was a farmer and in politics a Republican. He was a Representative from Kent County in 1863-4, having removed there in 1855. He died at Wyoming, Kent County.

George H. White, Representative from Kent County in 1863-4, was born at Dresden, N. Y., Sept. 9, 1822. He received a common school education and was a clerk in Indiana until 1842, when he removed to Grand Rapids. He was a clerk there two years, and in 1844 was elected register of deeds. He conducted a store at Rockford five years, then returned to Grand Rapids and was a supervisor and served as mayor in 1861-2. He was a lumberman from 1863 to 1865, and then engaged in the manufacture of plaster. With Amos Rathbun he built many stores, and was a director of the G. R. & I. Railroad, and of the Continental Improvement Company. He was a Whig until 1854 and after that a Democrat.

Augustus D. Griswold, Representative from Kent County in 1863-4-5, was born in Oneida County, New York, Oct. 11, 1823. By profession he was a lawyer and in politics a Republican. He came from Rome, N. Y., to Michigan in 1856. He was United States district attorney for Western Michigan from 1865 to 1869, except six months, when he was removed by Johnson and reappointed by him. He was speaker pro tem. in 1865, and chairman of the judiciary committee. He later engaged in the practice of law at Ovid, Mich.

Edward Jewell, Representative from Kent County in 1865-7, was born in Greene County, New York, Dec. 13, 1818. By occupation he was a farmer and in politics a Republican. He came to Michigan in 1855 and was four terms supervisor of Solon township, Kent County. He later removed to Petaluma, Cal.

Solomon O. Kingsbury, Representative from Kent County in 1867, was born in Connecticut, May 2, 1812, his father's family soon afterward removing to Painesville, Ohio, where he received a common school education. In early life he was a clerk. He became a resident of Grand Rapids at an early day and was a merchant. He was elected county treasurer in 1848 and 1850, serving four years, and then resumed mercantile business. In 1858 he opened a real estate

and insurance office and continued in that business during life. In 1867 he was appointed postmaster at Grand Rapids and held that position two years. He died May 16, 1886.

Thomas J. Slayton, Representative from Kent County in 1867-9-70, was born in Middlesex, N. Y., Jan. 9, 1837. In 1847 he removed with his parents to Grattan township, Kent County. He graduated at Hillsdale College in 1862, and at the University law school in 1864. He was for a short time at Vicksburg, Miss., in the Freedmen's bureau service, but commenced law practice at Lowell in the fall of 1864. He retired to a farm in Grattan township in 1874 and died there on July 15, 1875. In politics he was a Republican.

George G. Briggs was born in Wayne County, Michigan, Jan. 25, 1838. When young he became clerk in a store at Battle Creek, where he remained three years, and afterward for a time attended Olivet College. In 1862 he enlisted in the Seventh Michigan cavalry and served with his regiment in the Army of the Potomac during the war, the regiment forming part of the Michigan Cavalry Brigade under General Custer, and taking part in sixty-three battles. He was promoted from grade to grade and became colonel of the regiment in 1864. At the close of the war his regiment was sent west and remained in Utah until late in 1865. Mr. Briggs then became a merchant and manufacturer at Grand Rapids. In 1868 he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention, and in 1869-70 was Representative in the Legislature from Grand Rapids.

Asa P. Ferry, Representative from Kent County in 1871-72, was born in Spafford, N. Y., Jan. 20, 1824. He was brought up a farmer and was educated in common and select schools. He settled in Courtland township, Kent County, and farmed from 1849 to 1865; then moved to Cannon township, where he remained until 1879, and from that time was engaged in milling at Rockford. He was three years supervisor of Courtland and five years of Cannon. In politics he was a Republican.

Nicholas R. Hill, Representative from Kent County in 1871-2, was born in Monroe County, New York. He lived in Ohio several years, but removed to Nelson, Kent County, in 1856, and platted and named the village of Cedar Springs. He held the office of supervisor several terms and was for many years a justice of the peace.

Samuel M. Garfield was born in Pembroke, N. Y., June 23, 1816. He received a common school education and in 1841 settled in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. In 1858 he removed to Michigan and settled on a farm, a part of which is now included in the southern part of the City of Grand Rapids, where his son, the Hon. C. W. Garfield, later also a member of the legislature, now resides. He was supervisor and held other local offices. In 1871-2-3-4-5 he was Representative in the Legislature from Kent County. By occupation he was a farmer and in politics a Republican.

Ebenezer S. Eggleston, Representative from Kent County in 1873-4, was born in Batavia, N. Y., May 12, 1825. He received a common school education and in 1837 settled in Litchfield, Hillsdale County. In 1851 he removed to Grand Rapids and in 1861 was appointed consul to Cadiz, Spain, and remained there four years. He studied law with Lieutenant-Governor Gordon and was admitted to



the bar in 1852. He continued to practice law at Grand Rapids until his death.

Edward L. Briggs, Representative from Kent County in 1873-4-5, was born in the town of Skaneateles, Onondaga County, New York, July 30, 1830. In 1834 his parents removed to Michigan and he was educated in a common school. In 1850 he removed to Grand Rapids, where he continued to reside the remainder of his life. He was timber agent for the State land office from 1859 to 1865. Mr. Briggs' occupation was that of a farmer.

Erwin C. Watkins, Representative from Kent County in 1873-4-5, was born in the village of Covington, Genesee County, New York, Jan. 15, 1839. In 1844 the family emigrated to Michigan and settled in Grattan township, Kent County, where the future legislator received a common school education. He studied law, was admitted to the bar and subsequently removed to Rockford. In 1861 he enlisted in a company of cavalry, and when the company was incorporated in the first New York regiment of cavalry he was commissioned lieutenant, and subsequently received a commission as captain. In 1863 he was appointed assistant adjutant-general of the Department of West Virginia, and subsequently was assigned to the staff of Gen. W. H. Seward, where he served until the war ended. After the war he became a lumber merchant and also held several local positions. He served as warden of the house of correction at Ionia and was an Indian agent in the West for some years.

James W. Ransom, Representative from Kent County in 1875, was born at Liberty, N. Y., May 20, 1829. He was educated at the Wilson Collegiate Institute, New York, and adopted the profession of the law. He removed to Michigan in 1853, taking up his residence in Grand Rapids, of which place he later served as city attorney.

Simeon L. Baldwin, Representative from Kent County in 1877, was born in Canterbury, Conn., April 4, 1821. He was educated in the common schools and in 1840 removed to Norwich, and for several terms attended the academy at that place, removing to Grand Rapids, in August, 1844. He served as alderman of Grand Rapids for eight years. His occupation was brick making and in politics he was a Republican.

Welcome W. Johnson, Representative from Kent County in 1877, was born at Williamstown, Mass., Oct. 26, 1817. His parents removed to Oneida County, New York, in 1819 and he came to Michigan in 1835. He received a common school education. He served several years as town treasurer in Dundee, Monroe County. In 1849 he united with the Methodist conference as a preacher and remained thus connected until his death. He resided near Grand Rapids and operated a farm. In politics he was a Republican.

Clarence W. Prindle, Representative from Kent County in 1877-81-2, was born in Rutland, Mich., Dec. 20, 1849, and was two years a student at Albion College. He studied medicine and graduated at Hahnemann Medical College, Chicago, in 1871. He continued in practice at Grand Rapids until his death, Sept. 18, 1900, and was also for a time a member of the drug firm of Prindle Brothers. In politics he was a Republican.

William H. Powers, Representative from Kent County in 1879

was born in Troy, N. Y., April 7, 1841. He received a common school education at Grand Rapids, Mich., to which place he removed in 1847. He became a member of the firm of Powers & Walker, manufacturers of undertakers' goods, and also of the firm of William T. Powers & Son, manufacturers of lumber, lath and shingles. He held the office of city clerk, alderman, and was for a time a member of the board of police and fire commissioners of Grand Rapids. In politics he was a National. He died Feb. 25, 1895.

Nathaniel A. Earle, Representative from Kent County in 1881-2, was born in Allegan County, Michigan. He was educated in the common and high schools, and from 1870 to 1874 was teacher and principal of the Paw Paw schools. He studied law at Grand Rapids and was admitted to the bar. He then engaged in the practice of that profession, in which he continued at Grand Rapids until his death, July 18, 1891. He served as alderman, and was long one of the law firm of Stone & Earle, and later of Taggart, Stone & Earle.

Heman Palmerlee, Representative from Kent County in 1881-2, was born in Washington County, New York, Dec. 3, 1820, and came to Michigan in 1832, settling in Bruce, Macomb County. During six years of his early manhood he lived in Rochester, Oakland County, and was engaged in mercantile business. He then, in 1850, removed to Walker, Kent County, where he followed farming for about twenty-two years. During the remainder of his active career he was employed as an accountant and collection agent. His education, beyond that of the common schools of the new State, was obtained in the Romeo Academy. Politically he was a Republican. He died Aug. 28, 1892.

Niram A. Fletcher, Representative from Kent County in 1883, was born at Oakland, Ontario, Feb. 13, 1850. He was educated at a common school and became a teacher. He came to Michigan in 1870, studied law and engaged in very successful practice at Grand Rapids, as a member of the firm of Fletcher & Wanty. Politically he was a Democrat. He died Aug. 15, 1899.

Jarvis C. Train, Representative from Kent County in 1883, was born in Tunbridge, Vt., July 8, 1834. He came with his parents to Boston, Mich., in 1840. He lived in Whiteside County, Illinois, ten years as a farmer, and then settled at Lowell, Kent County, where he engaged in buying and selling farm products. He served in the Legislature as a Fusionist.

Madison J. Ulrich, one of the Representatives from Kent County in 1885, was born in Park, Mich., Dec. 5, 1835. He was reared upon a farm, and for a time followed the occupation of a farmer, but finally engaged as a tea and coffee merchant in Grand Rapids, where he completed his active career. He served as school inspector, collector, school trustee and supervisor, and was elected to the Legislature on the Fusion ticket.

Leonard H. Hunt, Representative from Kent County in 1887, was born in Manchester, Mich., Aug. 13, 1840. He removed with his parents to Lowell, Kent County, in 1855, and there he continued to reside the remainder of his life. He received a common school education and was a drug clerk until he entered the army as second lieutenant of the Twenty-sixth Michigan infantry. He was wounded and



promoted to be captain. After the close of the Civil War he entered the drug business at Lowell and continued therein the remainder of his active career. He served as supervisor and held other local offices. In politics he was a Republican.

John Killean, Representative from Kent County in 1887-89, was born at Buffalo, N. Y., Nov. 27, 1831, and took up his residence in Michigan in 1864. Formerly his occupation was varied, but in the later years of his life he was engaged in the grocery business. He served as alderman of Grand Rapids twice, president of the common council three times, and for a time was a member of the police and fire commission. He was elected Representative on the Fusion ticket.

Frank H. Gill was born in Middlebury, Summit County, Ohio, Feb. 12, 1845. His father was of Irish origin, although his ancestors came to America with William Penn. His mother was of English birth. Frank H. Gill received but a limited education, and that under most adverse circumstances. He began the real battle of life at the age of fourteen years when he began his apprenticeship, during which time he read incessantly, but in no particular direction, greatly to his regret in later years. On April 21, 1861, he enlisted under James B. Steadman and took part in the battle of Phillippi, the first engagement of the Civil War. He afterward enlisted in the Twenty-fifth Ohio infantry. After hostilities had ceased he was made master of transportation for the coast division at Orangeburg, S. C. In 1878 he went to California and took part in the agitation for adoption of the new constitution, and at last came to Michigan and settled in Grand Rapids. He was elected to the House of 1889-90 on the Fusion ticket.

George E. Judd was born in Massachusetts, March 23, 1838. In the Civil War he served in the Third Michigan infantry as captain. His occupation was farming. Mr. Judd was elected to the House of 1889-90 on the Republican ticket.

Norton Fitch was born in Orleans County, New York, Nov. 17, 1833. In 1848 he came with his parents to Michigan and settled on a farm in Sparta, Kent County. He acquired his education at the rural district school. In 1855 he purchased a piece of wood land of 120 acres in Alpine township, and began clearing it. At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted as a private in Company C, First Berdan's United States Sharpshooters. He participated in all the battles of the Army of the Potomac until he lost an arm at the second battle of Bull Run. He declined a commission and returned to his farm. About 1885 he moved to Sparta village, where he made his home the remainder of his life, although continuing farming. In politics he was a Republican. While in Alpine he was township clerk and supervisor, each six years, and he was president or director of the Ottawa and West Kent Agricultural Society during most of the time from its organization until his death. He was a member of the House of 1891-2 and was also elected to that of 1893-4.

Charles William McGill was born in Troy, Rensselaer County, New York, July 14, 1865, and is a lineal descendant from some of the most noted families of Scotland. In the spring of 1867 his parents came to Michigan and located on a farm in St. Joseph County. In 1885 Mr. McGill graduated in the White Pigeon union school and



immediately took up the study of law under private tutorage. He came to Grand Rapids in the fall of 1886 and was admitted to practice, Sept. 18, 1888. In politics he is a Republican and he was elected circuit court commissioner in 1892, being re-elected in 1894. His term expired Jan. 1, 1897, and he was elected to the Legislature of 1897-8. Upon the expiration of his term, in 1899, he removed to Lansing, where he has since been engaged in the practice of law.

Edgar J. Adams was born in Branch County, Michigan, Aug. 6, 1866. When he was six years of age his parents moved to Monroe County, locating on a farm. Six years later his father sold out and moved to Elwell, Gratiot County, where he started a small country store, later moving to Rushville, Isabella County. Mr. Adams' early education was acquired in the district schools of Monroe County. At the age of seventeen he taught school one term, at the close of which he entered the employ of Hopkins & Lyon at Mt. Pleasant, as fire insurance and abstract clerk, where he continued four years, and then engaged in the same business for himself. In 1888 he chose law for his profession, but being prevented by circumstances from entering an office or college, he pursued the course alone, and in 1894 passed his examination before Judge Grove of the Kent County bar. Thereafter he devoted his entire time to his profession. In politics he was a Republican. He held the office of justice of the peace, was elected to the Legislature of 1897 and re-elected to that of 1899, being chosen speaker of the House in 1899 on its organization.

Edmund Burfoot was born in England in 1858, and removed with his parents to Canada in 1867. He acquired his education in the public schools of Toronto, Canada, supplemented by private study. Having learned the art of wood carving, he came to the United States in 1880, working at his trade in different parts of the country, and in 1887 settled in Grand Rapids, still plying his trade by day and studying nights, and in 1895 was admitted to practice law. He was elected a member of the Legislature of 1899.

Jacob J. Van Zoeren was born in Kriesland, Mich., May 3, 1855, and lived on his father's farm until twenty-four years of age. His education was obtained in the district schools. After farming successfully two years he removed to Western Kansas and engaged in stock raising and mercantile business. Returning to Michigan in 1889, he located in Grand Rapids, where he became successfully engaged in the mercantile business. He was always a staunch Republican and was elected to the Legislature in 1900 and re-elected in 1902.

Frank Ladner was born at Newlyn, Cornwall County, England, Feb. 25, 1845. In March, four years later, with his parents he came to this country, settling on a farm in Cannon township, Kent County, where he resided the remainder of his life. He received his education in the district schools of Kent County. In politics he was a Republican and he held the offices of justice of the peace, treasurer, and was for many years supervisor. He was engaged in the lumbering business eighteen years and thereafter devoted his attention exclusively to farming. He was elected to the Legislature of 1903 and re-elected to that of 1905.

Cassius B. Towner was born in Byron Center, Kent County, Sept. 6, 1859, of American parents. He acquired his education in the



district schools, supplemented by one term each in the Mendon High School and Grand Rapids High School. With his father he formed a partnership and engaged in the lumbering business in 1880, and the stock of a general store was added in 1895. Mr. Towner was a Republican, but never sought political office until he was nominated and elected to the Legislature in 1904, and he was re-elected in 1906 without opposition.

Dennis Murray was born at Jackson, Mich., Sept. 27, 1868, of American parents. He received his education in the Jackson High School and the Kansas City College, Missouri. He is a dentist by profession and while conducting an office in Grand Rapids he also was for a time president of the local Keeley Institute Company. With the exception of ten years' absence in Colorado, where he served two years as a member of the State Board of Dental Examiners, he has resided in Michigan. He is a Republican and was elected to the Legislature in 1906. In 1914 he removed to Hastings, Mich., where he continued in the practice of dentistry.

#### COUNTY OFFICIALS.

An act of the first State Legislature, approved March 14, 1836, provided that "There shall be elected on the first Monday of November, next, and on the following day, and in every succeeding two years, thereafter, in each of the organized counties in this State, a sheriff, county clerk, county treasurer, county surveyor, a register of deeds, and two coroners, who shall respectively hold their offices for the term of two years." The act also provided for a probate judge, to hold office for four years, and two associate justices of the circuit court, to be elected for four years. The burning of the court house in 1844, and of the Taylor & Barns Building which was being used for county offices in 1860, and the neglect of the early newspaper publishers to carefully preserve the files of their papers, make it exceedingly difficult to obtain a complete list of officials prior to 1860. Nevertheless an earnest effort has been made in that direction, and the lists given in the following pages may be considered approximately correct.

**County Clerks**—The first occupant of this office was Dr. Stephen A. Wilson, who served from the time of the organization of the county until January, 1839, and he died a few months after retiring from the office. He was succeeded by Charles H. Taylor, who filled the position until January, 1847. The successors of Messrs. Wilson and Taylor, insofar as the writer has been able to obtain their names, with the years of their elections, follow: 1846, Samuel R. Sanford; 1848, Reuben H. Smith; 1854, Peter R. L. Peirce; 1868, Daniel McNaughton; 1871, Hobart H. Chipman; 1876, Wesley W. Hyde; 1876, Frederick S. Clark; 1882, Orland H. Godwin; 1885, Cornelius L. Harvey; 1892, Franklin D. Eddy; 1896, William J. Thomas; 1900, Connor H. Smith; 1906, Ralph A. Mosher; 1914, Robert G. Hill, present incumbent.

Dr. Stephen A. Wilson was the first physician to settle in the pioneer village of Grand Rapids. He was born in Herkimer County, New York, in 1810. He graduated at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, at Fairfield, and after

practicing in his native town for a short time, removed to Grand Rapids in August, 1835. He and Dr. Charles Shepard were partners from the spring of 1837 until the fall of 1839, when the partnership was dissolved by Dr. Wilson's death. He died after a relapse of typhoid fever.

Reuben H. Smith was born in Hamilton, Madison County, New York, Sept. 7, 1816, and received a common school education there. In 1838 he came to Michigan and bought and improved 160 acres of land in the township of Bowne. He was engaged in improving this land, teaching school in the winter seasons, until November, 1848, when he was elected county clerk and moved to Grand Rapids. He was twice re-elected, holding the office for six successive years. In the spring of 1855, Mr. Smith moved upon a farm of 280 acres in the township of Alpine, and remained until 1868, when he returned to Grand Rapids. He held the office of justice of the peace in 1844; of supervisor of Caledonia (then including Bowne) in 1848, and of supervisor of Alpine in 1856 and 1858. In November, 1874, he was elected county superintendent of the poor and was continued in that position twelve years. From 1872 to 1876 he was a member of the Board of Education. He was a member of the Old Residents' Association of the Grand River Valley and was its secretary from 1871 to January, 1890, continuously.

Daniel McNaughton was born in Hillsdale County, Michigan, July 1, 1837. When he was two years of age his parents removed to Plainfield township, Kent County, where Daniel was reared to manhood. He worked on a farm, and obtained his literary education in the Grand Rapids High School, subsequently teaching school three years. When the Civil War commenced, he enlisted in the Seventh Michigan cavalry, which was attached to the Michigan Cavalry Brigade (Custer's) in the Army of the Potomac. After being discharged, Mr. McNaughton came back to Grand Rapids and engaged in the grocery business on Monroe street, and three years later entered upon the duties of county clerk, being re-elected in 1870. In April, 1871, he resigned his position and went to Chicago to engage in the real estate business, but the fire of that year destroyed all his property. He returned to Grand Rapids and for two years was engaged in the real estate business and thereafter was connected with various business enterprises during the remainder of his active career.

Frederick S. Clark was born at Joliet, Ill., in June, 1848. In 1861 his parents moved to Kalamazoo, but in 1863 Mr. Clark returned to his native place and entered the employ of Morgan & McAllister, wholesale and retail grocers. On the dissolution of the firm he found himself out of business and for a time busied himself chopping cord wood, until February, 1865, when he came to Grand Rapids in search of more suitable employment. Nothing offering, he went to Kalamazoo and engaged as driver with the American and United States Express Companies, afterward becoming head clerk for the United States Express Company in the same office. He returned to Joliet in 1867, and was employed two years as a carpenter and joiner, and in 1869 came back to Grand Rapids. He rented a farm in Paris, in partnership with A. J. Root, and opened a Grange store at Bowen Station, where he failed in business, but settled with his creditors on a



basis of 100 cents on a dollar. Mr. Clark was postmaster and agent of the Michigan Central Railway while managing the store. In July, 1875, he was appointed deputy clerk of Kent County, and in 1876 was elected county clerk. He was re-elected in 1878 and again in 1880, holding the office until Jan. 1, 1883. He continued his residence in Grand Rapids until his death, Feb. 15, 1896.

**County Treasurers**—1836, Hiram Hinsdill; 1838, Aaron Dikeman; 1842, Sidney Smith; 1844, James Davis; 1848, Solomon O. Kingsbury; 1852, Nelson Robinson; 1856, Daniel C. McVean; 1857, Nelson Robinson; 1858, Thompson I. Daniels; 1866, George Young, Jr.; 1872, Henry Bremer; 1876, John A. S. Verdier; 1882, Andrew J. Stebbins; 1886, Charles D. Stebbins; 1888, Sherman T. Colson; 1890, Charles D. Stebbins; 1894, Sherman T. Colson; 1896, Henry B. Proctor; 1900, John A. Verkerke; 1900, William F. Woodworth; 1904, Ernest A. Crozier; 1908, John Paul; 1912, Eugene F. Smith; 1916, Ralph A. Mosher.

Hiram Hinsdill was among the settlers of 1834 in Grand Rapids. His first home here was in a log house on Pearl street, near the location of the present Arcade, and he resided there in 1835, while he was engaged in building the hotel afterwards known as the National, on the site of its successor, the present Morton House.

Aaron Dikeman, a native of Norwalk, Vt., was the first jeweler who established a regular trade in Grand Rapids. He came in 1837 and worked diligently at his business thirty years, when he retired from active life. He was a Freemason, and one of the organizers of Grand River Lodge, No. 34; and he was also one of the original members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. In the early days he was interested in river navigation. He died in 1882, upward of eighty-six years of age.

Sidney Smith came from Burlington, Vt., and is said to have been the first white man, after Rix Robinson, to settle in what is now Ada township, and for years he did much of the official business of the town. In fact the town was named in honor of his daughter, Ada, who afterward became Mrs. James Miller, of Grand Rapids. Mr. Smith was the first supervisor and also the first justice of the peace in Ada township.

Daniel C. McVean was born in Monroe County, New York, Aug. 19, 1819. In 1846 he settled in the township of Bowne, Kent County, and is remembered as among its able and useful citizens. He followed surveying several years, in addition to the work of carrying on and improving his farm, and he held a number of town offices. In 1854 he was chosen supervisor and to that position was re-elected in 1855 and 1856. In the November election of 1856 he was elected treasurer of Kent County, and this office he held at the time of his death, which occurred in Grand Rapids, Oct. 28, 1857. The Board of Supervisors elected Nelson Robinson to fill the vacancy in the treasurer's office and he served out the remainder of the term.

Henry Bremer, a graduate from a college in Germany, came to Grand Rapids in 1850 and resided here until his death, in 1883, engaged principally in manufactures and the grocery trade. He was several times chosen to official positions in the city, and in 1872, and again in 1874, was elected county treasurer.

John A. S. Verdier was born at Oostburg, Province of Zeeland,



Kingdom of the Netherlands, Dec. 17, 1838. In 1847 he accompanied his widowed mother to the United States and they located at Buffalo, N. Y., where they remained during the winter of 1847-8, removing the following spring to Sheboygan, Wis., where Mr. Verdier grew to manhood, receiving a common school education. When ten years of age he entered the office of the Sheboygan Nieuwsbode, the first paper printed in the Holland language in the United States. He remained in that office three years, learning the trade. When fifteen years old, he entered a hardware store, in which he was employed eight years. In 1862 he enlisted for the Union and was commissioned first lieutenant of Company E, Twenty-seventh Wisconsin infantry; was promoted in 1864 to the captaincy of Company H, same regiment, and served in that position until the close of the war. He then came to Grand Rapids and formed a co-partnership with W. P. Kutsche, in the hardware business. The firm remained as such for five and one-half years. Mr. Verdier then sold his interest and purchased the stock owned by John Connell, in the same line of trade. In May, 1874, William A. Brown was admitted as a partner and gas fitting and plumbing were added to the business. The June following the store and contents were burned, and that summer Mr. Verdier closed the business. In the fall of the same year he started a wood-yard and hay market and continued in that business until the fall of 1876. He then changed this business to the purchasing and sorting of rags and the manufacture of tinware, which line of trade he continued for a number of years. In the spring of 1871 he was elected alderman of the Fourth ward for two years, and was re-elected in 1873 for a like term. In the spring of 1875 he was elected comptroller of Grand Rapids. In the fall of 1876 he was elected treasurer of Kent County on the Republican ticket, re-elected in 1878 and also in 1880. After retiring from office he engaged in the banking business and was cashier of the Kent State Bank at the time of his death, March 8, 1911.

Andrew Jackson Stebbins was born in Madison County, New York, Oct. 14, 1840. In October, 1846, he came to Michigan with his father, who settled in Sparta, Kent County, two miles south of Sparta village. In youth he attended the common school, and when the Civil War came on he enlisted in Company B, Twenty-first Michigan infantry, and went into the service. He had charge of the medical supplies at Hospitals No. 1 and No. 4, Nashville, Tenn., and was hospital steward until the close of the war. After his return he worked on a farm two years and then engaged in the lumber trade, for several years owning and operating mills in Sparta township, and he also lumbered several years for William T. Powers. He then built an elevator at Sparta Center and bought grain for some time. Afterward, in 1880, he went to Dakota and spent a year at Deadwood, lumbering there for W. T. Powers. For several years in Sparta he held the office of justice of the peace. In 1882 he was elected treasurer of Kent County, after which time he resided in Grand Rapids, and he was re-elected in 1884, thus holding the office four years. In 1889 he was elected a member of the common council—alderman from the Fourth ward. He was engaged for a time in the real estate and insurance business, in partnership with Charles A. Robinson. He died June 10, 1907.



Henry Benjamin Proctor was born in Cascade township, Kent County, Feb. 4, 1860. In early life he attended the district schools of his neighborhood, and subsequently entered the high school at Caledonia, where he pursued the more advanced branches of learning until his twentieth year. He then turned his attention to the time-honored calling of a tiller of the soil, and in connection therewith carried on general trading, by means of which he was enabled to accumulate a handsome property, both real and personal. In 1889 he was elected township supervisor and discharged the duties of the position until 1896, when he resigned in order to take possession of the county treasurer's office, to which he had been elected. He was re-elected in 1898, but died Nov. 1, 1900, two months before the close of his second term. On the day following his death John A. Verkerke was elected by the board of supervisors to serve out the unexpired term.

John Adrian Verkerke was born in the Netherlands, June 30, 1857. He was nine years of age when brought by his parents to Grand Rapids, and here he received his education, graduating in the high school at the age of seventeen years. He then entered the Dygert Brothers printing house as an apprentice, and nine years later resigned as their foreman and began traveling as salesman for the Valley City Engraving & Printing Company, and this occupied his time for two years. For the following two years he was a partner in the firm known as Verkerke, Taylor & Hinsdill, printers. On Jan. 1, 1893, he became deputy county clerk and creditably filled that position until Nov. 2, 1900, when he was appointed county treasurer to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Henry B. Proctor. He served the remaining two months of Mr. Proctor's term and then accepted an appointment as deputy sheriff. Two years later he was appointed under-sheriff, and in 1904 was elected circuit court commissioner; was re-elected in 1906 and again in 1908, holding the position at the time of his death, Oct. 25, 1909.

William F. Woodworth was born in the town of Ovid, Seneca County, New York, May 8, 1852, and was reared to agricultural pursuits on his father's homestead. In May, 1881, he came from New York to Michigan and purchased 100 acres of partially improved land in Courtland township, Kent County. He served his township as supervisor in 1887 and 1888, and again in 1891 and 1892, and for five years served as school director. In 1900 he was elected treasurer of Kent County, was re-elected in 1902 and served until Jan. 1, 1905.

**Registers of Deeds**—The following occupants of this office are given in the order of their service, so far as it has been possible to obtain their names, and the list can be relied upon as being approximately correct. Prior to the organization of the State government a register of probate performed the duties of the office, but there is no record of any incumbent of that office in Kent County. Beginning with 1837 the registers have been as follows: 1836, Jacob Barns; 1840, Benjamin Smith; 1842, A. Hosford Smith; 1844, George H. White; 1846, John M. Fox; 1852, Fred W. Worden; 1856, Leonidas S. Scranton; 1860, John R. Stewart; 1866, William G. Beckwith; 1872, Simeon Hunt; 1876, Loomis K. Bishop; 1882, Henry F. McCormick; 1888, Nathaniel Rice; 1890, Adolphus L. Skinner; 1892, John T. Gould; 1896, Scott Griswold; 1900, Frank J. Cook; 1906, Hugh A. Montgomery, the present incumbent.



Jacob Barns came to Grand Rapids from Vermont and was one of the pioneers of 1836. He was one of the early justices of the peace here and was chosen as the first register of deeds for Kent County, being re-elected in 1838.

Amos Hosford Smith was a native of Berlin, Conn., born March 30, 1812. He was among the pioneers of 1835, arriving in Grand Rapids on Dec. 2, of that year. He came by the Erie Canal to Buffalo, then by Lake Erie to Monroe, from which place he continued his journey on horseback. Upon arriving at Grand Rapids he was so well pleased with the town that he decided to stay, and he opened a store near the Eagle Hotel on Market street. He was an accomplished bookkeeper and was engaged as such most of the time for about twenty-five years after coming to Michigan. In 1842 he was elected register of deeds, serving in that position two years, and in the summer of 1850 he was captain of the steamboat Algoma on Grand River. He served as city clerk, elected in 1851. In 1862 he was appointed Assistant Assessor of Internal Revenue and in that capacity served about ten years, and afterward about fifteen years as Deputy Collector, making about twenty-five years of continuous service as an Internal Revenue officer. He was vestryman and clerk of the vestry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church for seventeen years. In 1836 he started the first Sunday School in Grand Rapids, over his store, and this was one of the beginnings of the First Congregational Society. He died about 1889.

John M. Fox came into the valley in 1837, and after 1846, when he was elected register of deeds, he resided many years in Grand Rapids, where he was well known and respected as a citizen, business man and public officer. During the last ten years of his life he resided at Lowell, where he died Jan. 4, 1873, aged 62 years.

John R. Stewart was born Jan. 6, 1820, in Clarendon, Rutland County, Vermont. When he was twelve years old his parents moved to Niagara County, New York, and in 1844 he came to Cascade, Kent County, and purchased a farm. In 1854 he came to Grand Rapids and entered the employ of Foster & Parry, in the hardware business, where he remained six years. He was then elected Register of Deeds, which position he held three terms. After retiring from office he bought a one-third interest in an agricultural enterprise and operated several years in the firm of Chubb, Stewart & Luther. In 1870 the Grand Rapids Manufacturing Company was formed, and of this he was a member, the firm operating with success, but it was dissolved in 1877, when he and others organized a corporation under the same style. In January, 1872, he bought a half interest in a grocery establishment with E. J. Horton, on Monroe street. In 1876 he was appointed superintendent of the government buildings at Grand Rapids and superintended the building of the postoffice, which occupied his time for about four years. He died about 1887.

William G. Beckwith was born at Willet, Chenango County, New York, Dec. 3, 1832. The family moved to Rochester, then to Pennsylvania, and in 1845 came to Grand Rapids, and soon settled on a new farm, some distance east of the village. The early educational advantages of Mr. Beckwith were only those of the country district schools of the time, to which was added a term in the Union school



of this city. The main business of his early life was farming, with some school teaching. When the Civil War came on, he enlisted as a private Aug. 21, 1862, in Company B of the Fifth Michigan cavalry, which was one of the regiments afterward composing the Michigan Cavalry Brigade. He participated in all the engagements of his regiment during the following year and up to that at Buckland's Mills, Va., Oct. 19, 1863, where, with many others, he was captured by the enemy. As a prisoner he was first taken to Richmond and then to Belle Island, where he was confined until the early part of February, 1864. He then was sent to Andersonville, but on the way he, with a comrade, jumped from the cars and escaped. They were recaptured, however, and taken to Asheville, N. C., and later to Camp Vance, Morganton, N. C., thence to Salisbury, and in the latter part of April started again for Andersonville. But on the way he again escaped and finally reached the Federal lines in safety. From that time he served in all the battles of his regiment until, Aug. 29, 1864, he was shot through the thigh at Smithfield, in the Shenandoah Valley. In December he was back with his regiment and served with it until, at Appomattox, April 8, 1865, he lost his right leg by the explosion of a shell. Coming home from the army, he did much farm work on crutches in the following year. In 1866 he was elected Register of Deeds and was twice re-elected, filling that position six consecutive years. He served as collector of taxes in the Fourth ward of Grand Rapids, two years—1873-74. After 1876 he was in the office of the register of deeds as deputy for six years and was thereafter engaged principally in examination of land titles. He died March 24, 1908.

Simeon Hunt was born July 7, 1821, at Tunbridge, Orange County, Vermont. The first fifteen years of his life were spent in his native town on a farm, receiving a fair education in the common schools. His parents removed to Kalamazoo in 1836. In March, 1838, he and his father started for Boston, Ionia County, and cut their way through the forest to their place of destination, where they built a log house and entered resolutely into the exigencies of pioneer life. Mr. Hunt came to Grand Rapids in 1844, and until 1847 was engaged in clerking and as deputy county clerk, but in the last named year he returned to the farm. In 1856 he went to Lowell, where he opened business in general merchandise, selling his interest in 1870 and returning to Grand Rapids. In 1872 he was elected Register of Deeds and was re-elected in 1874. In 1877, in company with Henry B. Davis, he opened an insurance, loan and abstract office, in which business he continued until his death, Dec. 4, 1889.

Nathaniel Rice was born in Canada in 1846, and came with his parents to Plainfield township, Kent County, in 1866. He engaged in farming and represented Plainfield as a member of the Board of Supervisors for a number of years. In 1888 he was elected Register of Deeds, serving two years, and in 1894 he was elected sheriff of Kent County, but died Feb. 23, 1895, less than two months after entering upon the duties of the office. He also served as a member of the building committee when the present court house was constructed.

Adolphus L. Skinner was born at Pierpont, St. Lawrence County, New York, Jan. 27, 1834, and came to Jackson County, Michigan, in the spring of 1840. He was educated at the common schools and



Michigan Central College, when that institution was located at Spring Arbor; in Jackson County. He came to Grand Rapids in 1851, but returned to Jackson County in the spring of 1852, remaining there, attending and teaching school until the fall of 1854, when he came back to Kent County and purchased from the government 280 acres of land in the township of Nelson. There he lived, working on his farm summers and teaching school winters until March 23, 1863, when he moved to Grand Rapids. In public official positions the services of Mr. Skinner were often called for and zealously rendered. During his residence in Nelson he was supervisor of the township for six years. In 1860 he was appointed an assistant United States marshal and took the United States census in the north half of Kent County. Later, in Grand Rapids, he held the offices of justice of the peace, supervisor many terms, alderman for his ward, member of the Board of Education for several terms, and four years member of the Board of Review and Equalization. On the Board of Supervisors he served in all nineteen years and in 1889 was chairman of the Board. In 1890 he was elected Register of Deeds and served a term of two years.

John T. Gould was born in Clinton County, Michigan, Feb. 27, 1840. He came to Kent County in 1857 and settled in Plainfield township. In 1877 he removed to Algoma, where he engaged in farming and conducted a saw-mill. Mr. Gould served in the Civil War in Company F, Sixth Michigan cavalry, for three years and three months, and was mustered out as second lieutenant. He held the office of supervisor in Algoma for a number of years, and in 1892 was elected Register of Deeds, being re-elected in 1894, and thus serving two terms. He was afterward appointed county agent of the State Board of Charities and Corrections and was filling that position at the time of his death, March 17, 1911.

**Surveyors**—1838, Charles Shepard; 1842, William Slosson; 1846, Volney W. Caukin; 1848, William Slosson; 1852, James Dockeray; 1854, Ezekiel Howell; 1856, David R. Smith; 1860, John F. Tinkham; 1862, Edward L. Briggs; 1868, Robert S. Jackson; 1874, Dorr Skeels; 1882, Homer A. Collar; 1884, Emory W. Muenschner; 1886, Elias C. Martin; 1888, Dorr Skeels; 1890, Frederick Stevens; 1892, Theodore O. Williams; 1896, Fremont E. Skeels; 1898, Theodore O. Williams, present incumbent.

Charles Shepard, the first man to be elected surveyor of Kent County, was born July 18, 1812, in Fairfield, Herkimer County, New York. He began the study of medicine at the age of eighteen and graduated at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, Fairfield, in 1835. After practicing six months in Jefferson County, New York, he removed to Grand Rapids, then but the beginning of a small village, Oct. 20, 1835, second physician to settle within the limits of the present city, Dr. Stephen A. Wilson, the first physician, having been upon the ground in August of that year. Between these two physicians a co-partnership was formed, lasting until the death of Dr. Wilson, in 1839. Upon the organization of the county, Dr. Wilson was elected clerk and Dr. Shepard became surveyor. Dr. Shepard served as alderman in the common council of 1852 and 1854, and was elected mayor of the city in 1855. He continued to practice his profession in Grand Rapids until the time of his death, March 8, 1893.



**Coroners**—The following list, although not complete, gives the names of many of those who have served in this capacity: 1838, James Scribner and Matthew Patrick; 1840, Samuel Butler and Eliab Walker; 1842, Harry Eaton and Robert Howlett; 1844, Harry Eaton and H. H. Allen; 1846, Stephen O'Brien and Myron H. Balcom; 1848, Harry Eaton and Jonathan Nash; 1850, Robert Howlett and Solomon Withey; 1852, Robert Howlett and Rodney Robinson; 1854, Samuel F. Butler and Benjamin Davies; 1856, Leonard Covell and Arvine Peck; 1860, D. W. Bliss and Solomon Whitney; 1862, E. R. Ellis and Smith Bailey; 1864, Sterling W. Allen and Arvine Peck; 1866, E. R. Ellis and A. L. Pickett; 1868, Charles M. Holden and Albert Thomas; 1870, John Brady and Charles G. Hyde; 1872, John Brady and A. L. Pickett; 1874, DeWitt C. Burch and Samuel R. Wooster; 1876, Charles H. Maxim and DeWitt C. Burch; 1878, Horatio S. Holden and Herman D. Streeter; 1880, Daniel A. Laubenstein and DeWitt C. Burch; 1882, Walter B. Morrison and George M. Bradish; 1884, George M. Bradish and George H. Chappell; 1888, Henry E. Locher and Daniel J. Wallace; 1890, William J. Penwarden and George M. Bradish; 1892, George M. Bradish and Henry E. Locher; 1894, Henry E. Locher and Leonidas E. Best; 1896, Leonidas E. Best and Albert J. Patterson; 1898, Albert J. Patterson and Albert E. Luton; 1900, John Wright and Reuber Maurits; 1902, Simeon LeRoy and John B. Hilliker, present incumbents.

**Judges, Prosecuting Attorneys, Circuit Court Commissioners and Sheriffs**—See chapter on Courts and Lawyers.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### CHURCH HISTORY

BAPTIST, CATHOLIC, METHODIST EPISCOPAL, CONGREGATIONAL, EPISCOPAL, REFORMED, SWEDENBORGIAN, PRESBYTERIAN, LUTHERAN AND CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES—OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

The growth of religious sentiment in Grand Rapids has kept pace with the development of the city and county along commercial and other lines. The past fifteen years have been years of great activity in the erection of churches, not only in the building of churches for newly organized congregations, but also in the erection of edifices for older societies which have outgrown the buildings they occupied. In 1892 it was estimated there were about seventy churches, or religious organizations which in a work of this kind are classed as such, within the limits of the city. Today there are in the city more than 130, while the churches in the rest of the county would bring the total to considerably more than 170.

#### THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

The early history of the Baptist society dates back to 1822, when a Baptist mission was located here among the Ottawa tribe of Indians. This mission bore the name of the Thomas Station, in honor of one of the early English Baptist missionaries to India. Little, how-

ever, was done in the way of missionary work until about 1826, when the Rev. Isaac McCoy came and organized a school of twenty-five pupils. Soon after this, the Rev. Leonard Slater, a laborious, devoted and patient Christian worker, took charge of the mission, and in 1832 a church was formed among the Indians. In 1836 the mission, together with the Indians, was removed to Gull Prairie and the next year, 1837, the first Baptist Church was organized in Grand Rapids, with the Rev. S. D. Wooster as pastor. This gentleman remained with the church but a short time, and for the next four or five years the congregation was without a pastor, and finally the organization was abandoned altogether. In 1842 the Home Missionary Society of the Baptist Church sent Rev. T. Z. R. Jones to reorganize the church. When this was successfully done a place of worship was lacking and services were held in different buildings in the village. However, regular weekly services were held during the two or three years of Mr. Jones' stay, but when he left the interest in the organization again reached a low ebb. The church was supplied at different times by the Rev. F. L. Batchelder, who organized a church at Indian Creek, now the Alpine and Walker Church. In 1848 the Home Missionary Society again became interested in the organization and about the same time sent the Rev. C. A. Jenison to take charge of the same. The place of worship was established in the old Episcopal house of worship, at what is now the northwest corner of North Division and Crescent streets. In 1849, Rev. A. J. Bingham assumed the pastorate, who in turn was followed by Rev. Francis Prescott, and in 1856 the Rev. L. M. Woodruff became pastor. At his suggestion the church was disbanded, for the purpose of developing a different organization, and the Tabernacle Church was formed. This led to an unhappy division of interests, to separation, and the reorganization of the First Church. After Mr. Woodruff resigned, the Tabernacle Church called the Rev. S. F. Holt to become its pastor, and a short time before the latter's resignation, which took place in 1860, the two churches came together and Mr. Holt was pastor of the reunited church. But in 1861 the Second Church was formed and a few years later both organizations built houses of worship, the First Church a brick structure on the site of the one which was burned in 1917, and the Second Church on North Division street, between Fountain and Pearl streets. In 1862, the Rev. Peter Van Winkle became pastor of the First Church, and during his pastorate the church in the adjoining township of Paris was formed, from members of the First Church, but even after this loss it remained the stronger of the two city churches. In January, 1869, what was known as "The Baptist Church of the City of Grand Rapids" was formed of the congregations of the First and Second Churches. They decided upon the old site, at the corner of Bostwick avenue and Fountain street, for a new edifice, as this spot was already hallowed in the affections of many. The new church was dedicated in 1877. A few years later, in 1883, a portion of the congregation, feeling the need of a place of worship on the West Side, withdrew from the united church. Rev. Samuel Graves, D. D., served the church as pastor from 1870 until May, 1885, and during his pastorate the name was changed from the Baptist Church of the City of Grand Rapids to the Fountain Street Baptist Church. In 1885 also



some of the members of the Fountain Street Church, uniting with some from the Second Church, left to organize the Wealthy Avenue Baptist Church, now known as the Wealthy Street Baptist Temple. In 1917 the fine church edifice at the corner of Fountain street and Bostwick avenue was destroyed by fire, and the present temporary meeting place is in Powers' Theatre. Rev. Alfred W. Wishart is the present pastor of the Fountain Street Church.

As noted above, a Baptist society was organized on the West Side in 1883. Sunday School services had been conducted there for a couple of years prior to the organization of the church and a growing sentiment in favor of the establishment of a church on the West Side resulted in a meeting to formulate plans for the organization. Fifty-six members of the Fountain Street Church residing on the West Side withdrew their membership from that organization and on Oct. 8 organized the Second Baptist Church, adopting the faith and covenant of the New Hampshire confession. In 1883 the liberality of Deacon J. W. Converse, of the First Baptist Church of Boston, Mass., who for many years had large business and real estate interests in this city, made it possible for the new organization to have a church building. His liberality commenced by the donation of a lot, 132 feet square, and the building and furnishing of a house of worship thereon, which was appropriately dedicated, Sept. 30, 1883. Rev. Isaac Van Westenbrugge is the present clergyman.

The Wealthy Street Baptist Temple traces its origin to a Mission Sunday School established in the summer of 1875 by the Fountain Street Baptist Church. Soon afterward a chapel was built on Charles street, near Wealthy avenue, where the school and other Sabbath services were held until after the organization of the church, Jan. 12, 1885. On Oct. 19, of the following year, the cornerstone was laid for the fine church building now occupied, on Wealthy street at the corner of Eastern avenue. The edifice was dedicated on Jan. 16, 1887. The present pastor is Rev. Oliver W. VanOsdel.

The first African Baptist Church was organized, in 1889, as "The Messiah Baptist Church." Meetings were first held at Ringuette's Hall on South Division street, and the church now meets at 513 Henry avenue. Rev. Melville M. D. Perdue is the present pastor.

The Calvary Baptist Church is the result of a mission maintained by the Fountain Street Baptist Church. The society was organized Nov. 8, 1889, as the Calvary Baptist Church of Grand Rapids. The house of worship was dedicated in the latter part of the year 1890. The location of the church is at the northeast corner of Antoine street and Ionia avenue and its pastor is the Rev. Henry A. Lyon.

The other Baptist churches in the city and environs are: The Berean Baptist Church, at 1574 Coit avenue, Rev. William H. Garfield, pastor; the Burton Street Baptist Church, at the northeast corner of Burton street and Horton avenue, Rev. Horton L. Williams, pastor; the Holland Baptist Church, at 1144 Quarry avenue, Rev. Douwe Laansma, pastor; Reed's Lake Baptist Church, at the corner of Lake Drive and Croswell avenue (East Grand Rapids), no pastor; Scribner Avenue Baptist Church, at 1236 Scribner Avenue, Rev. Robert N. McNemer, pastor; and the Swedish Baptist Church, at the corner of Sibley street and Gold avenue, no pastor.



## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

While the Baptists were the first to hold services in the new settlement of Grand Rapids there can be no denial of the fact that the first apostle of the Christian religion to teach the faith on the site of what is now Grand Rapids was a Catholic. Ere the settlement was established here, the Rev. Gabriel Richard and other priests from Detroit had visited the Indian villages of this section, and they made many conversions among the red men. While no echo of the wars which wrested the country from French dominion and afterward from England into an infant republic reached the vicinity of Grand Rapids, the territory immediately surrounding underwent various changes in ecclesiastical rule. While a French possession, it was a dependency of the diocese of Quebec, and remained as such until 1810. When the diocese of Bardstown—now Louisville—Ky., was organized it was placed under the archbishop appointed to govern that district. Subsequently it became part of the diocese of Cincinnati and ten years later, in 1832, was made a part of the diocese of Detroit. While the church claimed jurisdiction over the territory of what is now Kent County, it made no effort to establish missions or churches, and for many years the entire Northwest was visited only by Jesuit missionary priests. The historian Bancroft says of these, "Away from the amenities of life, away from the opportunities of vain glory, they became dead to the world and possessed their souls in unalterable peace. The few who lived to grow old, though bowed by the toils of a long mission, still kindled with the fervor of an apostolic zeal. The history of their labors is connected with the origin of every celebrated town; in the annals of French-Americans not a cape was turned, not a river entered, but a Jesuit led the way." After the suppression of the Jesuit order, in 1773, the whole of what now constitutes the States of Michigan and Wisconsin was left to the direction of one priest, stationed at Detroit. The real history of the Catholic Church in Grand Rapids begins with its transfer to the diocese of Detroit, and is almost synonymous with the secular history of the city.

The first permanent settler and the founder of Grand Rapids, Louis Campau, belonged to the same faith as the early French missionaries. In 1837 he built a church for St. Andrew's parish on the southwest corner of Monroe and Division streets. It was never deeded to the Bishop, but the congregation worshiped there for some time. A Roman Catholic mission had been located here by the Rev. Frederic Baraga, in June, 1833, on the west bank of the river. In the fall of 1834 he was assisted as rector of St. Andrew's parish, which, as before stated, had been established in June, 1833, by the Rev. Andreas Viszoczky—who succeeded him in 1835—a Hungarian, whose eminently useful career was here ended by his death, Jan. 2, 1853, at the age of 55 years. For some months Reverend Viszoczky held services in the building erected by Mr. Campau, and later the pastor and flock were sheltered by the chapel of the Indian village, or a small red school house on Division street, between Crescent and Michigan streets, or in private dwellings. In 1847 the Bishop sold the lands which had been granted by the government for the benefit of the mission, and out of this fund Father Viszoczky bought the Richard



Godfroy house and grounds on the southeast corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets, now occupied by the Aldrich-Godfrey-White block. There a stone church was built in 1849, dedicated to St. Andrews. It was used until March 27, 1874, when, the grounds having been sold to Moses V. Aldrich, the church was torn down and the stone used for the foundations of the present edifice. Upon the death of Father Viszoczky, he was succeeded by Rev. Edward Van Pammel, and in September, 1857, Rev. F. J. Van Erp assumed the duties. The church grew apace with the city and State and it was finally determined that Grand Rapids should be the seat of a bishopric, and on May 19, 1882, it was selected as a cathedral city. It was deemed advisable to appoint one of the German tongue to assume charge of the Episcopal See, and the Rt. Rev. Henry Joseph Richter received the appointment. He was consecrated on April 22, 1883, and immediately assumed the duties of his office.

Catholic history from that time on for nearly thirty-four years is identified with the history of Bishop Richter's career in Grand Rapids. For the following sketch of the earlier life of that prelate we are indebted to Rev. Dr. Peter Moerdyke's article on Churches and Religious Societies in Grand Rapids, prepared for another publication, in 1891:

"The Rt. Rev. Henry Joseph Richter was born on the 9th of April, 1838, at Neuen Kirchen, in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg. After studying in the local schools and under a private teacher, he came to the United States in 1854, and entered St. Paul's School in Cincinnati in the succeeding year. This was followed by five years of steady application in St. Xavier's, St. Thomas at Bardstown, and Mount St. Mary's College in Cincinnati. He went to Rome in 1860, entering the American College, and, winning his Doctor's cap in 1865, was ordained on the 10th of June by Cardinal Patrizi. Returning to Cincinnati in October, he filled the chair of Dogma, Philosophy and Liturgy, in Mount St. Mary's Seminary, and a year later was made vice-president of that institution. In 1870 he founded the church of St. Laurence and made it a thriving parish; was chaplain to the Sisters of Charity at Mount St. Vincent's Academy, and a member of the Archbishop's Council, and one of the Committee of Investigation of the Diocese. When His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII, established the Diocese of Grand Rapids on the 19th of May, 1882, the Rev. Dr. Richter was selected for the new See. He was consecrated and enthroned in St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids, on the 22d of April, 1883, by the Most Rev. William Henry Elder, of Cincinnati. At the beginning of his administration Bishop Richter found thirty-six priests, thirty-three churches with resident pastors, and seventeen parochial schools with 2,867 pupils, out of a population of 50,000 Catholics. At present there are in his Diocese seventy-five priests, fifty-six churches with resident pastors, and thirty-eight schools with 7,244 pupils. At his request the Franciscan Fathers of the Holy Ghost and of the Most Holy Redeemer have established houses in the Diocese. Various new charitable institutions have been established, and substantial churches have been built and are in the course of erection in different parts of the Diocese. Having taken part in the Second Provincial Council of Cincinnati, in 1882, as one of the secretaries, he assisted



as Bishop at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, in 1884. In the spring of 1885 he made his first official visit at Rome, and attended the Provincial Council of Cincinnati in 1889. Bishop Richter is of a very modest, quiet and retiring disposition. He has always had the reputation of being a very learned and able theologian. A man of principle and energy in the discharge of his duty, he always seeks the most unostentatious manner of performing it. Combining an unusual activity with such high talents, he labors with untiring zeal at the important work entrusted to his care."

The infirmities of age finally began to tell on the venerable Bishop, and his waning strength was supplemented by the appointment of Rt. Rev. Michael J. Gallagher as coadjutor. On Dec. 26, 1916, Bishop Richter departed this life, and on the 29th of the same month the obsequies were held, Bishop Schrembs, of Toledo, Ohio, preaching the sermon. His remains were placed in a receiving vault at the old St. Andrew's cemetery. Much might be written of the institutions and organizations which came to Grand Rapids and to the Grand Rapids Diocese as the result of the efforts of Bishop Richter, but the limitations of space forbid more than the mention of a few of them in this connection. Under his direction the following institutions were established: St. John's Orphan Asylum, at Grand Rapids; the Holy Childhood's Indian Industrial School, at Harbor Springs; the Home for the Aged Poor at Grand Rapids; the House of the Good Shepherd, for wayward girls and fallen women, at Grand Rapids; hospitals at Grand Rapids, Manistee, Bay City, and Muskegon; and seminaries for girls in every large city in the Diocese. The Catholic population of the Diocese is now in excess of 152,000. Bishop Richter was succeeded by Rt. Rev. Michael J. Gallagher. An extended sketch of Bishop Gallagher may be found in the biographical section of this work.

There are in Grand Rapids today thirteen churches of the Catholic denomination, besides a number of missions scattered throughout the county. The Church of the Holy Name, at 1970 Godfroy avenue, is one of the younger organizations of the church in the city, having completed its organization in 1906. The Church of Our Ladow of Sorrows, located at the southwest corner of Sheldon avenue and Maple street, was organized in 1917. The Sacred Heart Church, at 150-152 Valley avenue, is one of the Polish churches of the city, its first pastor was Rev. L. P. Krakowski, and the date of its origin is 1903. The congregation of St. Adalbert's Church, whose edifice is at the corner of Fourth street and Davis avenue, was organized in 1880. St. Alphonsus Church, at 180 Carrier street, is one of the comparatively recently organized churches, its edifice having been dedicated in 1888. St. Anthony's, at the northwest corner of Broadway avenue and North street, a German congregation, was organized in 1906, and the pastor is Rev. Jerome Preisser. St. Francis Xavier's, at 240 Reynolds street, was dedicated in 1913, and St. Isador's, on Diamond avenue, in 1899. The consecration of St. James' Church, at 751 Bridge street, occurred on Sept. 16, 1902. The congregation of St. Joseph's Church was organized in 1887 and the edifice of the parish was consecrated on Feb. 10, 1889. The first German church organized in the city was St. Mary's, on Turner street, in August, 1857. SS. Peter and Paul Church,



on the east side of Quarry avenue, between Myrtle and Webster streets, was consecrated in 1906. There are in the city about fifteen Catholic parochial schools, and the church also maintains a number of hospitals and other charitable institutions, all of which are mentioned under different chapter heads.

#### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Methodism in Grand Rapids had its beginning as early as 1835. Rev. Osband Monett, a member of the Ohio conference and one of the missionaries of the church, arrived in Grand Rapids during one of his missionary journeys. There is little doubt that he was the first minister of the Methodist faith to visit the settlement. He rode his circuit around once in four weeks, and held services in the primitive log cabins of the settlers; and it is altogether probable that he held the first religious service of any nature ever conducted among the white settlers at Grand Rapids. According to Methodist usage he formed, in the winter of 1835-36, a class for the purpose of organizing a church. Services were held in the upper part of Henry Stone's house on the west side of Bond street, between Michigan and Crescent streets. The first quarterly meeting of the church was held at Grandville, in May, 1838, the only people present being the Rev. E. H. Pilcher, presiding elder; Rev. James H. Freese, the missionary, and James Ewing, class leader. Knowlton S. Pettibone, Moses H. Russell and Thomas Buxton were then appointed stewards of the Grand Rapids church. The first trustees recorded, in 1839, were William C. Davidson, James Ewing, K. S. Pettibone, Robert I. Shoemaker, and Harry Dean. The preachers sent, in September, 1840, were Elliott M. Crippen and Daniel Bush, and under the guidance of the latter an effort was made to secure an edifice for worship, one being erected on a lot purchased from Thomas Smith, of New York, at the southeast corner of Division and Fountain streets. The pastors succeeding Mr. Bush, whose terms were for various periods, were the Revs. Franklin Gage, Andrew M. Fitch, Jacob E. Parker, Myron B. Camburn, Reuben Reynolds, and James Summerfield. In the summer of 1851 the necessity of more room resulted in an addition of sixteen feet on the front of the house, making the seating capacity 225. Succeeding Mr. Summerfield came Rev. Francis A. Blades, and it was during his pastorate that the growth of the congregation made necessary a branching out.

The above in brief is the early history of Methodism in Grand Rapids. Following the fortunes of this church it is learned that in 1854 a parsonage was erected on a lot which previously had been purchased by the ladies of the church, on the northwest corner of Fountain and Division streets. In 1868 a new edifice was erected on the same site and the same was dedicated on June 20, 1870.

To avoid the encroachments of the business district the members of Division Avenue Church, now known as the First Methodist Episcopal Church, determined to go further out and property was purchased at the corner of Fulton street and Barclay avenue. Upon this property was erected the fine new edifice which the church is now occupying. The present pastor of the congregation, which is the largest in point of membership of the Methodist churches in the city, is Rev. John A. Willits.



The need of a new church on the West Side was felt by the Methodists of Grand Rapids as early as 1853, but nothing was done toward carrying the movement until in June, 1855. A number of Methodists residing on the West Side purchased from the Presbyterians a building which they had occupied at the west end of the Bridge street bridge, where later the Weirich Block was erected. This building was used for Methodist services for a number of years and was then sold to the Grand Rapids Stave Company and moved to the west side of Front street, near Butterworth avenue, where it was destroyed by fire about 1880. The membership of the congregation had increased to such an extent, in 1871, that it was thought advisable to build a larger church. Property at the northeast corner of Turner avenue and Second street was purchased and the building of a parsonage and church was begun. For want of funds, only the basement of the church could be completed for occupancy at that time. But in 1887 the debt was paid and the auditorium was completed and dedicated. Rev. Frederick M. Thurston is the present pastor of the congregation. Trinity Church, at 116 Eastern avenue, had its inception in the winter of 1874, as the result of prayer meetings which had been held at the residence of Peter Yokom, on Cherry street. The first service under the direction of a Methodist pastor was held in the following autumn, and on Dec. 13, an edifice erected upon lots previously purchased of Aruna Bradford, was dedicated. The present church building was erected in 1884, and Rev. Clarence E. Hoag is the incumbent of the pastorate. The present Plainfield Avenue Church, large in point of membership, is the continuance of mission work performed by the Rev. A. D. Newton, beginning in October, 1878. In the early autumn of 1879 a separate church organization was effected and it adopted the name of Plainfield Avenue Church. Its present pastor is Rev. George F. Francombe.

St. Paul's Church is the outgrowth of a society organized as a class in the autumn of 1876 for the purpose of conducting weekly prayer meetings to accommodate a goodly number of the members of the Division Street M. E. Church, who were deprived of such privileges on account of their distance from the church. In June, 1880, the presiding elder recognized the class as a mission and Rev. Mr. Archer was appointed to take charge of it. Mr. Archer preached his first sermon in the "upper room" over the Fair Ground gateway, and his second under the shade trees in the yard of Mrs. C. H. Fox, on Fourth avenue, where he continued all summer, to a large congregation. The Rev. Mr. Valentine, appointed by the conference, took up the work, Oct. 7, 1880, and found thirty-eight members. In 1883 the organization was legally incorporated and took the name of the Ames M. E. Church. In the late 90's the church building was moved from the corner of Ninth avenue and Division street, to Tenth avenue, and the name was changed to Tenth Avenue M. E. Church. In 1905 the church had outgrown its quarters and lots were secured at the northeast corner of Jefferson avenue and Highland street and the edifice which now houses the congregation was shortly afterward erected. The name of the congregation was again changed to St. Paul's M. E. Church and the present pastor is Rev. H. E. Walker.

On Feb. 17, 1889, the German M. E. Church building, at 528-530



Scribner avenue, was dedicated. Its present pastor is Rev. Emil G. Boch. Arnett Chapel (African), at 341 Commerce avenue, whose present pastor is Rev. Lewis Pettiford, was removed to its present location in 1897, its former location having been on Spring street, where it was organized in 1872. St. Luke's African M. E. Zion Church was organized Feb. 1, 1878, and was the first colored organization in Grand Rapids. The church edifice was erected and dedicated in 1881. It is located at 123 Franklin street, and the pastor in charge of it is Rev. John E. Transue. Burton Heights Church can trace its origin to the formation of the Feakins Memorial Church. When the latter congregation, organized in 1895, and which had for its first pastor Rev. O. E. Wightman, moved into its fine new structure at the southeast corner of Burton street and Horton avenue, it changed its name to Burton Heights Church. Its present pastor is Rev. Guy B. Fleming. Epworth Church, which for the past twenty-two years has been situated at 600 Lafayette avenue, has for its pastor, Rev. Edgar R. Cochrun. Joy Memorial Church is situated on the west side of National avenue, between West Fulton and Watson, and its pastor is the Rev. Delphos L. Berry. This includes all of the established churches, having regular pastors, in the city. However, there is the Clark Memorial Church, at 1530 Sherman street; the Colored Mission Church, at 732 Cornwall avenue, and the Swedish Assembly of Christ, at 645 Front avenue, none of which have resident pastors.

The church in Grand Rapids has in the course of its history been under the direction of two different conferences. From its earliest recognition until 1836, the year of the formation of the Michigan Conference, it was part of the Ohio conference, but continuously since that date it has been a part of the Michigan conference. In connection with the church is maintained a deaconess' home. The building it now occupies was completed in 1894, and it was obtained through the efforts of Mrs. Laura C. Aldrich, widow of Rev. William J. Aldrich, who was presiding elder from 1887 to 1881.

Besides the churches in the city the Methodist Episcopal Church has places of worship at Caledonia, Lisbon, Kent City, Edgerton, the Grove Church in Oakfield township, Rockford, Alto, McCords, Lowell, and a few other places, all in Kent County.

There is also one Free Methodist Church in the city, at 1320 Ashland avenue, of which Rev. Herbert D. F. Gaffin is pastor.

### THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

The earliest Congregational service held in Grand Rapids was in 1836, and a society was started in that year which has been in continued existence up to the present time. In 1839 it reorganized itself into the First Congregational Church of Grand Rapids, the original organization having had twenty-two charter members. In 1841 the Roman Catholic Church, situated where the Porter Block now stands, was sold by Louis Campau to the Congregationalists, and this was their first permanent home. At the time of the reorganization of the church, the Rev. James Ballard was engaged as the first pastor, and the first deacons elected were Samuel F. Butler and Ebenezer Davis. Prior to the purchase of the Catholic Church the meetings of the society were held at the residences of Myron Hinsdill, W. G. Henry,

A. H. Smith, and Amos Roberts, in the Prospect Hill school house and at the court house. But after the purchase of the Catholic edifice the society took possession of it and it was dedicated to their service on Jan. 2, 1842. In 1842 the Ecclesiastical Society was formed to hold and care for the church property. The Rev. James Ballard served the church until Dec. 29, 1847, having never, during his nine years of service, received a stated salary, owing largely to the fact that the church was far from self-sustaining, receiving annually about \$200 from the Home Missionary Society. Upon his resignation a call was extended to Rev. Thomas Jones, of Grass Lake. The call was accepted and on June 15, 1848, Mr. Jones was installed.

The Rev. James Ballard was born at Claremont, Mass., April 20, 1805, and was of Welsh descent. He was graduated at Williams College, in 1827, and began preaching in Pennington, Vt. There, April 26, 1831, he married Miss Emeline Hinsdill. He studied Theology with Dr. Benan, of Troy, N. Y., and for a few months attended the Theological Seminary at that place. He moved to Grand Rapids in 1837, and became the first pastor of Park Congregational Church, March 29, 1839. He was president of the Kent County Bible Society, in 1846. He left the pastorate in 1848 and taught in the high schools on both sides of the river. In 1854 he was president of the Kent County Teachers' Institute. He was missionary in Grand River Valley for nine years, and was then sent South by the American Sunday School Union to teach the freedmen. There he remained five years. He died in Grand Rapids, Jan. 7, 1881.

Mr. Jones served as pastor of Park Church for two and one-half years, until 1850, and was succeeded by Rev. H. L. Hammond, who was installed in June, 1851, and remained as pastor for nearly five years. His successor was Rev. S. S. N. Greeley, who was installed in May, 1857. In December, 1862, he joined the army as a chaplain, retaining his relations to the church until July, 1863, the Rev. William L. Page supplying the pulpit during the half year's absence of the pastor. Rev. J. Morgan Smith was installed as pastor of Park Church to succeed Mr. Greeley, on Sept. 13, 1863, and resigned after twenty years of faithful service to the church. In September, 1884, Rev. A. R. Merriam became pastor of Park and served in the position until 1891. Rev. Dr. Dan. F. Bradley became pastor in 1892, succeeded by Rev. Robert W. McLaughlin, in 1902, and he by Rev. Edwin W. Bishop, on Oct. 15, 1909. Rev. Bishop continued in the pastorate until 1916, when he was succeeded by Rev. Charles W. Merriam, who is still the incumbent of that position. A review of the career of Mr. Merriam, who has become one of the leading figures in the Congregational Church, is included in the biographical section of this work. During the pastorate of Rev. J. Morgan Smith the present spacious and sightly edifice, at the southeast corner of East Park avenue and Library street, was erected, in 1868.

What is known as the Second Congregational Church was organized in July, 1870, with six members. In the spring of 1869 the First Church had established a Sunday School mission in the northern part of the city, and in the fall erected a small frame meeting house for this purpose, on old Canal street, just north of East Leonard street. This was the first edifice for the newly organized church society, and



it was occupied from the time of its organization until 1874, when it was moved to the present location of the church building. This was the church home until 1900, when the present edifice at 1331 Plainfield avenue was completed, the dedication exercises occurring on Dec. 9. Rev. John Holloway was the first pastor of the church.

An article on "The Churches," written for a publication issued in 1906, contains the following concerning the South Congregational Church:

"South Congregational Church was organized Dec. 12, 1878. It was received into the Grand Rapids Association April 10, 1879, and the church and society were consolidated Nov. 5, 1884. A church at the present location was dedicated Dec. 12, 1886 and was destroyed by fire Nov. 29, 1897. The rebuilt church was dedicated Feb. 26, 1898, and is located at the corner of Central and Eighth avenues. The original officers were as follows. Trustees—M. W. Bates, Freeman Lathrop, Jared L. Post, Charles T. Patterson, A. F. North. Deacons—Joshua Henshaw, M. W. Bates, Freeman Lathrop, E. W. Heth. Deaconesses—Mrs. G. A. Pollard, Mrs. H. Smith. Clerk and treasurer—Creyton J. Post. The pastors of the church have been: Rev. E. C. Olney, 1877-1881; Rev. B. F. Sargeant, April, 1881, to August, 1889; Rev. F. Noble, September, 1889, to July, 1891; Rev. J. E. Smith, October, 1891, to September, 1894; G. P. Moore, November, 1894, to October, 1896; Rev. F. E. York, December, 1896, to February, 1904; Rev. John Gordon, the present pastor, February, 1904."

Bringing the history of this church organization down to the present time it may be stated that Rev. Gordon continued to serve as pastor until 1908. The present pastor, Rev. C. O. Grieshaber, came to the church in 1909.

The Smith Memorial Congregational Church was organized in September, 1887, and its original members were formerly associated with the old Park Church. The object of the establishment of this society was to supply the demand for church work in that portion of the city and also to name it in loving memory of the late pastor, the Rev. J. Morgan Smith, who died Oct. 1, 1883. Its present pastor is Rev. Herbert McConnell. Plymouth Congregational Church was organized in December, 1892, and in the following year a fine church edifice was erected at 879 Franklin street. Other Congregational Churches in Grand Rapids and vicinity today, besides those already mentioned, are East at 342 Norwood avenue, of which Rev. Spencer C. Haskin is pastor; Wallin Memorial at 1053 First street; Rev. William E. Hill, pastor; the Swedish Mission at 507 Broadway avenue, Rev. Andrew Anderson, pastor; and Comstock Park, Rev. Fred W. Sass, pastor.

#### THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The Rt. Rev. Samuel A. McCoskry, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan, who was consecrated July 7, 1836, sent David J. Burger to Grand Rapids as a lay reader in August of that year. Mr. Burger prosecuted his work in the village and vicinity for several weeks, and on Thursday, Oct. 6, 1836, pursuant to a call previously circulated, St. Mark's Church of the Village and County of Kent was duly organized. The call referred to bore the signatures of seventeen

villagers. Mr. Burger was chosen to represent the newly formed parish in the convention then to be held in Detroit, where he was ordained a Deacon, and did not return here; consequently the parish languished. Yet the records state that the Bishop visited the parish and conferred the rite of confirmation upon a class of two persons, Sunday, June 17, 1838. This was the first service here of the kind. In November, 1839, the organization of the society was effected at a meeting in the office of George Martin. George Coggeshall and Charles I. Walker were elected wardens and John Almy, H. R. Osborne, Charles Shepard, F. J. Higginson, J. M. Smith, James M. Nelson, and Henry P. Bridge were chosen vestrymen. The Rev. M. Hoyt was installed as rector and served as such until April, 1841.

The Grand Rapids parish, which had been named St. Mark's, was without a pastor for the two years succeeding the resignation of Rev. Mr. Hoyt. Under the latter's administration the congregation had acquired a piece of ground on the northwest corner of Division and Crescent streets, and a small frame edifice, valued at \$800, was under construction. On May 24, 1843, Rev. Francis H. Cuming was tendered the rectorship of St. Mark's and on Oct. 1 of the same year he entered upon this field of labor. The church membership grew rapidly, and the rapid development of the lower town induced the parish officers to secure a site for church purposes farther south, and two lots on "Prospect Hill" were purchased, which were soon afterward exchanged for the present site. The present church building was first occupied, in October, 1848, and the formal consecration of the edifice took place Sept. 9, 1849. The towers were erected in 1851, and four years thereafter the building was enlarged by the addition of the choir and transepts, bringing it substantially to its present cruciform plan.

No history of the Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids would be complete without a review of the life of Rev. Dr. Cuming, whose part in the early development of the church was the leading one. Francis H. Cuming was born at New Haven, Conn., Oct. 28, 1799. When a youth he was adopted into the family of the Rev. I. C. Rudd, D. D., at Elizabethtown, N. J., and educated for the ministry. He was ordained as Deacon at 19 years of age, and in 1820 advanced to the priesthood at Rochester, N. Y. Afterward he was pastor successively at Binghamton, N. Y., Reading, Pa., and LeRoy, N. Y., and in 1833, and for several years, in New York City, where he was the first Rector of Calvary Church. In 1839 he removed to Ann Arbor, Mich., and in 1843 came to Grand Rapids. Here he at once won recognition as a devoted and energetic church leader, and also as a sagacious business man; and here he maintained a prominent and influential position, in both religious and secular society while he lived. In 1855 he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by an Eastern college. He was an earnest and impressive preacher, an energetic business man, a steadfast friend, and in his family and among neighbors affectionate, warm-hearted and generous; positive and unbending but courteous in manner, yet familiar, frank and social upon acquaintance and intimacy. When the Civil War broke out he went with the Third Michigan infantry as chaplain; but shortly was compelled by failing health to retire and come home, where he



rapidly sank to his death, which occurred Aug. 26, 1862. Mr. Cuming married Jan. 31, 1822, at Auburn, N. Y., Caroline A. Hulbert. She died at Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 26, 1827, leaving one son. Thomas B. Cuming, who died at Omaha in March, 1858, being at the time Secretary and acting Governor of Nebraska Territory. Rev. Cuming again married, April 6, 1831, Charlotte Hart, who survived him, and died in this city in 1883, leaving five daughters, of whom one, Anna, resides at 308 Barclay avenue.

Rev. Dr. Josiah P. Tustin accepted a call to St. Mark's in July, 1863, and remained until 1870, when he resigned to enjoy the benefit of foreign travel. During his pastorate the membership continued to grow and it was determined that the parochial bounds of St. Mark's Church should be restricted and that another parish, on the West Side, should be established. St. Paul's Memorial Chapel on Turner avenue was established as a mission, for which St. Mark's Church erected the present church building, in 1869. It was consecrated by the Bishop in 1870, and in 1871 its congregation became an independent parish, with the Rev. Sidney Beckwith placed in charge. On Feb. 15, 1875, Grace Church was organized in the southern part of the city and Rev. Seth S. Chapin was made its first rector.

Pursuant to a call by the Bishop, a special convention was held in St. Mark's Church, Dec. 2, 1874, composed of the clergy and lay deputies from all the parishes in the western part of the State, for the purpose of organizing a diocese. Western Michigan was emerging from its missionary character and it began to be felt that the seat of a see should be in Grand Rapids. The diocese of Western Michigan was organized, Rev. George D. Gillespie, D. D., was elected bishop, and he was consecrated in St. Mark's Church on St. Matthias' Day, Feb. 24, 1875. At a special convention, in 1905, Rev. Dr. John Newton McCormick was elected coadjutor and in February of the succeeding year was consecrated. In that year the church edifice of St. Mark's parish became a pro-cathedral. Bishop Gillespie passed away, on March 19, 1909, and Bishop McCormick succeeded to the position.

George De Normandie Gillespie was born in Goshen, Orange County, New York, June 14, 1819. Following his early schooling he was graduated at the General Theological Seminary in 1840. On June 28 of the same year he was made a deacon in St. Peter's Church, New York, by Bishop B. T. Onderdonk. He was advanced to the priesthood in St. Mark's, LeRoy, N. Y., June 30, 1843, by Bishop De Lancey. His pastorates were St. Mark's, LeRoy; St. Paul's, Cincinnati; Zion, Palmyra, N. Y., and St. Andrew's, Ann Arbor. For many years he was secretary of the diocese of Michigan. Hobart College gave him the doctorate in divinity in 1875, the year he was consecrated bishop.

### THE REFORMED CHURCH.

The Domestic Missionary Board commissioned the Rev. Hart E. Waring, of New York, as a western missionary, and about May 20, 1840, he came to this field of labor and was warmly welcomed by Deacon George Young and a few others. On Sunday, May 26, 1840, he preached in a private house and gave notice of the intention to organize a "Reformed Protestant Dutch Church," as it was then legally



styled. This event came to pass on Monday, Aug. 12, 1840, at the residence of the new pastor, which stood on the northeast corner of Bronson (now Crescent) street and Ionia avenue. A Sunday School was organized and George Young was chosen superintendent. The church thus organized first held its services for from six months to a year in the village school house, a small frame building on "Prospect Hill," on the south end of the site now occupied by the Ledyard Block on Ottawa street; and next, for greater convenience, hired at fifty cents a week the upper part of Amos Roberts' building on the northeast corner of Fountain and Ottawa streets, the present site of the Grand Rapids Trust Company building. There they worshiped nearly a year, next occupying for two or three months the second floor of a frame store nearly opposite Market, on Monroe street. In the second year the church had won such favor, and the congregations were so large, that, in the autumn of 1841, the necessity of securing a suitable and permanent home was felt. Accordingly, the Kent Company offered to give a large lot on the southwest corner of Michigan and Ottawa streets for a church site, and the Consistory, on Jan. 3, 1842, concluded to accept this offer and to build as soon as possible on the ground thus presented. Ground was broken for the basement, April 25, 1842, and on May 9 the cornerstone was laid with appropriate ceremonies, in which the entire population was interested, for it was a great event in the little town, and the house was to be an imposing and magnificent one for those times. In the autumn of that year the basement was completed and occupied, and "Deacon" Young was commissioned to solicit aid in the East to finish the edifice. Disaffection having arisen between the pastor and Elders Young and Butler, though sustained by the almost unanimous endorsement of the church and the community, in which this was then the leading church, Mr. Waring resigned, Aug. 1, 1843. The Rev. Andrew B. Taylor soon afterward assumed the pastorate and labored faithfully, but in September, 1848, seeing no signs of promise for the future of the church, he resigned, and by authority of the Board Dr. Penney was asked to supply the church, but he declined. In July, 1860, the Rev. Philip Berry, just entering the ministry, became the pastor, and a reorganization of the church was completed and work resumed with twelve members. With the aid of churches abroad the auditorium was soon finished and the church was dedicated June 9, 1861. In this early history the following pastors succeeded Mr. Berry, who resigned in July, 1861: Rev. John M. Ferris, June, 1862, to July 1, 1865; Rev. Henry E. Decker, July, 1865, to September, 1867; Rev. Christian Vander Veen, March, 1868, to May, 1871; Rev. Jacob Vander Meulen, May, 1871, to April 28, 1872; Rev. Peter Moerdyke, Sept. 21, 1873, to July 27, 1891. About June, 1863, the location of the church was deemed so unfavorable that the congregation moved to the old meeting house, northeast corner of Division and Park streets, built in 1840 by St. Mark's Church, and remained there until the end of 1866. Then the building belonging to the church was reoccupied by the congregation, and in 1868 it had its first installed pastor, previous ones being missionaries of the Board of Home Missions, which paid most of their salaries. In the night of May 3, 1872, a "black Friday" visited the church, and the morning of Saturday revealed



only the charred debris and begrimed stone walls of their sanctuary left. In February, 1873, the old property, containing the ruins of the church, was advantageously disposed of by sale and exchange, and in May following they were in possession of a parsonage at 151 Lyon street, and a house of worship, then bought of the Baptist Church, which was building its edifice on Fountain street. Rev. P. Moerdyke was called in August, 1873. He accepted and entered upon his labors, Sept. 21, and for one month occupied the pulpit with the Rev. S. Graves, D. D.—each preaching once per Sabbath—which union meetings continued until the Baptist society vacated the building. The congregation soon outgrew the seating capacity—420—of that house, and so strongly desired a more commodious and creditable sanctuary, and better facilities for the ever enlarging demands of the work, that in April, 1888, a site for a new church, at the southwest corner of Fountain street and Barclay avenue, was purchased of Dr. Charles Shepard, and upon which they soon built the present house of worship, which is among the most attractive and commodious in the city. The following pastors have served the church since 1891: Rev. W. Hall Williamson, May 26, 1892, to Dec. 31, 1898; Rev. J. M. Vander Meulen, Sept. 1, 1899, to Aug. 5, 1901; Rev. G. Watermulder, Dec. 11, 1902, to Sept. 19, 1905; and in 1907 came Rev. J. Alexander Brown, who is the present pastor.

The Reformed Church in America is the daughter of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. When the first settlers from Holland came to New Amsterdam, in New Netherlands, now New York City, in 1622, they brought their pastors and school teachers with them, and set themselves immediately to the task of building churches and schools. Similarly, when more than two centuries later, in 1847, a new tide of immigration set in from Holland, and hundreds came to the wilds of Western Michigan, they immediately established churches of their own faith and order. Under the leadership of Revs. A. C. Van Raalte, D. D., C. Vander Meulen, and M. Ypma, they colonized principally in Ottawa and Allegan Counties. In a little while, however, many came to Grand Rapids for the purpose of obtaining work. The pioneer Hollander in this city, and certainly the pioneer churchman, was Francis Van Driele, so long and favorably known in both church and business circles. In August, 1849, Dr. A. C. Van Raalte, of Holland, organized a church here, installing F. Van Driele and G. Dalman as elders. The congregation continued to hold services in the First Reformed Church edifice on Michigan street until 1854, when they occupied the new brick church on Bostwick street, now used by Van Driele & Company as a warehouse. They seem to have experienced great difficulty in securing a pastor, until in 1854, when the Rev. G. H. Klyn was secured. He was a man of undoubted piety, and his labors were greatly blessed during the first two years of his pastorate, but he seems to have been lacking in strength of character, and when a spirit of secession arose, in 1856, he was prevailed upon to become its leader, and on Sabbath morning, Jan. 27, 1857, declared his purpose to secede. In 1859 Rev. W. A. Houbolt was called as pastor and remained two years, closing what may be called "the period of struggle." The period of rapid growth and signal prosperity began with the pastorate of that genial and fatherly



man, the Rev. Cornelius Vander Meulen, in 1861. The church was enlarged several times, but proved inadequate for the needs of the growing congregation, so that in 1870 the large church on the east side of Bostwick avenue, near Lyon street, was built, the cornerstone being laid on May 31. The pastor continued to labor with zeal and enthusiasm until the infirmities of age compelled him to seek relief, in 1873. Rev. N. H. Dosker was now called from the Netherlands to succeed him in the pastorate, and proved to be the man eminently qualified for the work demanded. He was both a strong preacher and a wise leader, and the genial Vander Meulen remained his co-pastor for about three years, or nearly to the day of his death, which occurred in August, 1876, at the age of 76 years. In 1883 the pastor resigned to accept a call from Kalamazoo. In 1884 Rev. Egbert Winter, D. D., was called from Pella, Iowa, to assume the pastorate of the church, and he, with signal ability and success, shepherded this flock for eleven years. A time of trial came to the Second Church in 1895, when during May the church building was burned to the ground, and in the following month the pastor, Rev. Winter, was called to the Theological Seminary at Holland. But the people took fresh courage and set themselves with enthusiasm to the task of building a new house of worship, and within a year a more beautiful edifice, and better adapted to the needs of the church, had arisen, phoenix-like, from the ashes. In 1896 the Rev. Dr. J. DeRey assumed the pastorate and remained three years and a half. Rev. Matthew Kolyn assumed charge in April, 1901, and remained until 1911, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Henry Hospers. The latter officiated until 1917, and since then the church has been without a pastor. A movement has been started, and is said to be favored by both congregations, to unite the First and Second Reformed Churches in one organization.

In the work of the Second Reformed Church it was found that the extraordinary growth of the mother church necessitated the building of chapels at the eastern and northern limits of the city. The first to aspire to the dignity of an independent organization was that in the eastern part of the city, in the neighborhood of what was known as "the brickyard." On Oct. 1, 1875, sixty-two members were enrolled, and these were followed by forty-six others soon afterward, making a total of ninety families in the course of a few months. The first building was 30x50 feet, which soon proved too small to accommodate the rapidly growing congregation, and it was enlarged to 50x80 feet, and in 1886 again enlarged to 50x100 feet; and it has been greatly improved during recent years, being an ornament to that part of the city. On Dec. 15, 1875, the first pastor, the Rev. A. Kriek-aard, was called, and he remained with the church for nearly twenty-seven years, resigning on account of failing health, in 1902. On April 3, 1903, the Rev. A. W. DeJonge was installed as the second pastor of the church. In October, 1905, he resigned to assume a charge in Iowa. He was succeeded, in 1906, by Rev. Albert Vander Berg, who has continued as pastor up to the present time.

The Fourth Reformed Church, at 1301 Ionia avenue, might very well be called the twin sister of the Third Church, as it was organized only a few weeks later, and both are daughters of the Second Church. A committee of the classis of Grand River, and of which Rev. N. H.



Dosker was chairman, organized this church Sept. 25, 1875. The chapel or church was dedicated Nov. 26 of the same year. The first pastor, Rev. L. J. Hulst, was installed June 23, 1876. A division of the church, occasioned by an anti-secret society agitation, caused a majority of the congregation to secede in 1881, and the courts gave the seceders the church property. The minority was recognized by classis as the lawful organization and meetings were held for a time in an old grocery store on Coldbrook street, between Ottawa and Ionia avenues. As soon as matters had assumed definite shape after the confusion incident to the secession, a pastor was called and Rev. Peter De Pree was installed, Nov. 16, 1882. In a little while the "store" became too small, and with the generous help of other Reformed Churches in the city and elsewhere, a temporary building was erected on the present site. But so strongly did the resuscitated Fourth Church grow, that a permanent home soon became an imperative necessity, and with the help of the Board of Domestic Missions the present suitable house of worship was erected. Rev. De Pree labored faithfully and successfully for eight years, and then he was compelled by impaired health to resign, in April, 1891. The succession of pastors since that time has been as follows: Rev. P. J. A. Rouma assumed charge in 1891 and served the church very acceptably until 1894, when he was succeeded by Rev. J. W. Warnshius, who labored enthusiastically and successfully until 1900, when he was succeeded in turn by Rev. J. Van Houte, who was an able preacher and genial man, but who thought it wise on account of frail health to try a change of climate, and in 1903 he accepted a call to a church in Iowa. The Rev. Cornelius Kuyner assumed charge in January, 1904, and from 1912 to 1915, the Rev. Gerrit Boch officiated. The present pastor, the Rev. Harke Frieling, assumed charge Sept. 1, 1915, and is meeting with encouraging success.

Eighty-six persons presented letters of dismissal from the parent church—the Second—and a new church was organized Jan. 28, 1886, the following being elected as elders: Evert Welmers, Albert Welmers, John Wormnest, and Gerrit Antflink. The meetings were held in a hall on Grandville avenue for a while, but this soon proved too small, and in the dead of winter, and in the incredibly short time of four days, willing hands erected a temporary building of 30x64 feet, which served the congregation well until the elegant structure, which is still in use, was completed in the fall. The first pastor, Rev. R. H. Joldersma, who was installed May 26, 1886, was just the man to push this infant enterprise. The building of a church and parsonage was immediately decided upon, and the present commodious church building, at the northwest corner of Church Place and Pleasant street, was dedicated on Thanksgiving Day of the same year. Rev. Joldersma resigned in March, 1889, and was succeeded by Rev. Alo Bursma, under whose able and faithful ministry of twelve years the church developed along many lines. On Dec. 5, 1901, the beloved pastor was suddenly called to be with God, sincerely mourned by the entire congregation, and indeed by all who knew him. Rev. Benjamin Hoffman entered upon his duties June 26, 1902, and continued until Nov. 21, 1912, when he was succeeded by Rev. Liebe C. Nettinga, who has been very successful in many ways.



On Feb. 14, 1889, Mrs. A. C. Brown, of New York City, a lady deeply interested in domestic mission work, contributed \$200 toward building a chapel in Oakdale Park, then a new suburb of the city, and the edifice was dedicated July 2, 1889. The organization of the Sixth Reformed Church took place there Aug. 9, 1889, twenty-eight members in full communion presenting letters, and the majority of them came from the Third Reformed church. The first pastor was Rev. J. M. Lumkes, who served the church until 1893, when he was succeeded by Rev. William Pool, who resigned in 1897. In 1898, Rev. Peter De Pree, D. D., assumed charge and continued to serve as pastor until failing health compelled him to resign, in 1903. He was succeeded by Rev. John De Haan, who served until 1910, when he accepted a pastorate at Kalamazoo. The church was then without a pastor until 1911, when Rev. Harm Dykhuizen was installed, and he served but a short time and then removed to Albany, N. Y. He was succeeded in 1912 by Rev. William J. Duiker, who served until 1917, when he accepted a call in Lansing, Ill., and since then the Sixth Church has been temporarily without a pastor.

The Seventh Reformed Church, a daughter of the Fourth Church, was organized May 1, 1890, by a classical committee, consisting of Revs. P. De Pree, A. Bursma, and Dr. E. Winter. At first a temporary church was built on Jennette street, but in a few months plans for a new church were adopted and subscriptions received. The southwest corner of Leonard street and Jennette avenue was bought, and on the lot there was a house suitable for a parsonage, and room for a church. The cornerstone was laid in July, 1892. The church now grew rapidly and in June, 1891, the first pastor, Rev. J. Lamar, was installed, but he remained only one year. After a vacancy of several months, the Rev. T. W. Muilenburg assumed charge, serving the church for four years and then he was called to the First Church of Grand Haven. After a year's service as pastor by Rev. James F. Zwemer, Rev. M. E. Broekstra assumed charge in October, 1900. In August, 1905, the church again became vacant by the resignation of Rev. Broekstra. He was succeeded in 1907 by Rev. Frederick Lubbers, who remained until 1910, when he accepted a call at Sioux Center, Iowa. In 1911 Rev. John F. Haemstra was installed as pastor and remained until 1914, when he removed to Chicago, Ill., being succeeded in the same year by Rev. Albert W. DeJonge, who has served as pastor up to the present time.

The Eighth Reformed Church is located at 825 Burton avenue, about one block west of Clyde Park avenue. It was organized Nov. 16, 1891, with twenty members in full communion and eight adult baptized non-communicants. The first regular pastor was Rev. R. Duiker, who was installed Dec. 10, 1893, but resigned in 1896, on account of infirmities incident to old age. In the meantime a church and parsonage had been built at an expense of about \$4,000. In December, 1896, Rev. Peter Ihrman assumed charge and remained until March, 1899, when he was succeeded by Rev. Harke Frieling, who labored in this field until October, 1903. The next pastor was the Rev. John Sietsema, who was installed Dec. 28, 1903, and he remained until 1911, when he accepted a call at Cano, Ill. The present pastor is the Rev. Meinhard D. Vander Meer, who was installed in 1911.



The Ninth Reformed Church, located at the corner of Watson street and Delony avenue, was organized Feb. 23, 1892. Considerable enthusiasm was manifested from the very start, and within a year a neat church and parsonage had been built. The first pastor was Rev. Henry K. Boer, who assumed charge in September, 1892, and remained until 1895. In October, 1895, the Rev. J. W. Ta Winkel assumed charge and remained the pastor until 1899. In the spring of 1900 the Rev. H. P. Schuurmans, just graduated from the Seminary, assumed pastoral charge and labored faithfully and successfully for three years, and then was succeeded, in August, 1903, by Rev. C. Heines, who remained until 1907. Rev. R. H. Joldoesma then succeeded to the pastorate, remaining until 1909, and in 1910 Rev. A. Karreman was installed and remained until 1914, when he was succeeded by the present efficient pastor, the Rev. John Van Westenburger.

Bethany Reformed Church is, in numerical order, the Tenth, being organized on June 25, 1893. Rev. John Lamar, then pastor of the Seventh Church, was invited to become the first pastor, and he labored with great success until 1898. In the first year of his ministry a site was purchased at 739 Baldwin street, and a commodious church and pretty parsonage was erected. In 1899 the second pastor, Rev. James Ossewaarde, assumed charge and labored successfully for three years, when he was succeeded, in 1903, by the Rev. Nicholas Boer. The latter remained until 1907, when he removed to Chicago, Ill., and in 1908 he was succeeded by the present pastor, the Rev. James Wayer, under whose ministry the church is growing rapidly.

Grace Reformed Church is the eleventh in order of organization. While regular services began Sept. 27, 1896, the organization of the church was not effected until Feb. 18, 1897, when thirty-seven members were constituted as Grace Reformed Church. A very commanding site was chosen at the northeast corner of Caulfield avenue and B street, and a pretty stone structure, capable of accommodating 350 people, was erected. In the following year, Rev. J. Vander Erve was called as the first pastor, and he remained three years, from 1898 to 1901. Rev. R. H. Joldersma, who succeeded him, remained only a few months. In 1902, Rev. P. P. Cheff assumed the pastorate and served the church very acceptably until 1905, when he was succeeded by Rev. B. Braak. The latter remained until 1909, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Lawrence P. Dykstra, who remained until 1912, when he accepted a call at Ebenezer, Mich. He was then succeeded by the present pastor, the Rev. Cornelius H. Spaan.

Bethel (English) Reformed Church was organized in 1907, and is located at 1700 Coit avenue. Rev. Arend J. To Paske is the present pastor.

Immanuel Reformed Church is located at the corner of Eastern avenue and Thomas street, and was organized April 23, 1907. It was first started under the name of Hope Mission and the first meetings were held in a small store on Eastern avenue, near Franklin street. The first pastor after the organization of the church was Rev. R. Bloemendal. The old Swedenborgian church edifice, which stood on the corner of Division avenue and Lyon street for many years, was

purchased, torn down and rebuilt at the corner of Eastern avenue and Franklin street. This first church served the congregation for eight years and, in July, 1915, was sold and moved to another location, where it was converted into a four-family flat building. In its place on the old site is a beautiful new and commodious church edifice, seating 600, with all the latest church architecture and design. It was dedicated on April 16, 1916. The first pastor remained until June, 1911, and one month later was succeeded by Rev. S. Riepma, who served the pastorate until November, 1913. The church was without a pastor then until October, 1914, when Rev. Isaac Van Westenburg was installed and he has continued in the pastorate up to the present time. Immanuel is the only English speaking church in the northeastern part of the city.

Trinity Reformed Church, located at 1222-24 Davis avenue, was organized in 1908. Rev. John Van Zomeren is the present pastor.

Beverly Reformed Church, at the southeast corner of Porter street and Meyer avenue, was organized in 1914. Its present pastor is Rev. Arie J. Vanden Heuvel.

Calvary Reformed Church is located on the south side of Fulton street, near Carlton avenue, and it was organized Aug. 30, 1915. The first meeting was held May 30, 1915, the place being at that time a mission station. The first pastor was Clarence P. Dame and he has remained in charge of the pastorate up to the present writing. At this time meetings are being held in a sectional church building, loaned by the Board of Domestic Missions and erected by the men of the church during the evening hours. A site has been secured for a new church building at the corner of Fulton street and Lowell avenue, and an edifice will be erected ere long.

Zion Reformed Church, at the northwest corner of Burton street and Jefferson avenue, is the youngest church of that denomination in the city. It was organized in 1917 and its present pastor is the Rev. Ralph Bloemendal.

#### THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH.

In 1847 the Hon. Lucius Lyon, a man of rare ability and of much prominence in the early history of Michigan, awakened such an interest here in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg and the doctrines of the New Church as to lead to the formation of a New Church association at a meeting held Jan. 18, 1849. A church edifice was erected at the northwest corner of Division avenue and Lyon street, and it was completed and opened for service April 4, 1852. Henry Weller, an Englishman of brief residence here, an able and interesting speaker, who had been employed as minister since April 30, 1850, was the means of building up the church until his last year of service, when he was the means of nearly breaking up the society through an assertion of claims as a teacher, which alarmed and dispersed the congregation. A few remained and suspended Mr. Weller, and they reported his conduct to the next annual convocation of New Church societies, by which he was unanimously deposed Feb. 22, 1853. The effect was such as to suspend activity until 1858-59, during which the late James Miller, a layman in the church, conducted services, and



in 1861-62 the Rev. George N. Smith was pastor, but the society was too weak to support a minister, and after this enjoyed only occasional services, a legal existence being maintained to hold the property. The house of worship, so little occupied by the owners, was leased for many years to different churches, and finally, in 1889, after refitting the building for the resumption of worship and active church life, services of the Swedenborgians were again resumed, the Rev. George H. Dole having then entered upon his pastorate of the society. But after a time interest again waned and finally, in 1907, the edifice was sold to the newly organized Immanuel Reformed Church, who tore it down and rebuilt it at the corner of Eastern avenue and Franklin street.

### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

As early as 1847, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Penney, a Presbyterian minister, was living here in retirement and had preached at the services held in the interest of Christian worship. On Oct. 26, 1855, a number of persons met to discuss the feasibility of organizing a Presbyterian society. The idea met with favor and the organization was effected, with the Rev. Courtney Smith as pastor. Twelve persons offered letters of dismission from Park Congregational Church and Sarell Wood, John Terhune, George W. Perkins, Elihu N. Faxon, and Henry Seymour were elected elders. Soon after organizing, a small chapel was built on Front street, about opposite the present Belknap wagon shops, and this was occupied until 1868. The first records of the church tell of the election of John Terhune, George W. Perkins, E. Morris Ball, Boardman Noble, S. Wood, E. N. Faxon, and A. H. Botsford as trustees and it was decided to name the organization "the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Rapids." During the first pastorate, which terminated in April, 1861, the growth was so rapid that 176 members were reported in 1858, and even in its second year the present grounds were purchased and the building now occupied by them commenced. In 1857 the congregation was full of sanguine expectations, looking for an early occupancy of the edifice, whose walls were completed and the roof begun, when the financial crisis suddenly arrested this enterprise, as it did multitudes of others throughout the country. The suspension of work upon it left the structure exposed to the elements, and at last the front wall, made of plaster or gypsum stone, succumbed to these destructive forces. In 1868 the congregation repaired the building and finished and occupied the basement. The house of worship was finally completed in 1873. At the time of its completion the building was one of the finest church edifices in the city.

Westminster Presbyterian Church is an outgrowth of the First Church. In the early sixties a number of members of the latter organization determined to organize a church on the east side. On July 17, 1861, east side Presbyterians met in the old Swedenborgian Church and unanimously resolved that it was expedient and desirable to organize a Presbyterian Church on the east side of the river, to be called the Westminster Presbyterian Church. A committee was appointed to take the necessary steps for an organization and seventeen members of the First Church became a part of the new organization.

In 1866 the society erected its own church, at the southwest corner of Division avenue and Lyon street, and the present edifice, at the corner of Island street and Lagrave avenue, was completed in 1885. Rev. Sanford H. Cobb, D. D., served the church as pastor for some nine years, from 1885 to 1904. Its present minister is the Rev. E. L. Jarvis.

For the following sketch of Third Presbyterian Church, at 140 National avenue, we are indebted to an article on Presbyterian Church history, written for a publication issued in 1906:

"In the summer of 1875, the Rev. William A. Fleming, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, began a mission in the woods, or oak grove, where this church is now located. In the fall of that year Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Boyer, Mr. and Mrs. H. Benjamin, and Mr. and Mrs. J. King met at the residence of M. J. Ulrich to devise measures to secure a suitable place in which to hold their Sunday School during the winter. The committee then appointed recommended the erection of a temporary building. W. O. Hughart, hearing of this action, offered to give the lumber for a church building, provided a lot was secured and held in trust by the First Presbyterian Church. This proposition was accepted, and the trustees selected the present lot, which cost \$600. Quite an undenominational or union interest was manifested by the people of that neighborhood in the success of the enterprise, and the ladies' soliciting committee and socials were so liberally encouraged that the purchase price of the lot was soon raised, also a fund of \$800 for the building of a chapel, which was dedicated early in the spring of 1876. In March the Sunday School was organized with Mr. Ulrich as superintendent, the average attendance for the first year being seventy-five. In addition to this work, Sunday afternoon worship was conducted there, Mr. Fleming preaching once in two weeks, and supplies from the city and about rendered gratuitous service on the alternate Sundays. In this manner church privileges were provided for a goodly congregation; but it became necessary for the trustees holding the property to fulfill the contract for the lot, when the mission was organized, Feb. 18, 1883, as it now exists. The Rev. M. Bocher became its pastor on that day, and the first officers were elected, to-wit: Elders—Charles Van Aernam and Orsan Hauser. Trustees—R. B. Wallin, George McInnis, William E. Knox, Henry Mosher, Isaac Quigley, and G. A. Brosseau. There were forty-four charter members. Mr. Bocher closed his pastorate May 1, 1885, and the Rev. William H. Hoffman succeeded him, June 3 of that year. \* \* \*

"The pastorate became vacant by the resignation of Mr. Hoffman, March 3, 1889, but on the first of May the Rev. Thomas G. Smith succeeded him as stated supply, in which capacity he served for a year, at which time, because of the prosperous condition the church had attained under his direction, he was called to the pastorate and installed in said office in May, 1890. In 1891 the numerical strength of the church made a more commodious building a necessity and the church edifice was enlarged to almost double its original seating capacity at an expense of about \$1,800. It was also during his pastorate that the church became self-supporting, declining to receive any further aid from the Board of Home Missions. In 1894 the question of changing the name of the church organization became an



issue with the result that its present name was dropped and that of 'Third Presbyterian Church of Grand Rapids, Mich.,' adopted. In December, 1895, the pastor asked the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relations, and, the church concurring, the request was granted, the pastor going to another field, in Sullivan, Ind. \* \* \* The church, after a vacancy in the pastorate for five months, extended a call to Rev. Reuben S. Smith, of New Berlin, Ill., who was installed as pastor, in May, 1896. \* \* \* In October of 1904 the pastor notified the Session that, owing to failing health, he was compelled to lay down the work to go to Colorado to recuperate, and the Presbytery at their fall meeting of said year at the pastor's request dissolved the relations, the church very reluctantly concurring. This was followed by a vacancy in the pulpit of eight months, during which time it was supplied by various ministers, until May, 1905, when the church extended a call to James F. Smith, graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill., which call was accepted by Mr. Smith, he beginning his work on the 1st of June, 1905."

Continuing the history of this church, Rev. Smith's pastorate was of comparatively short duration, and his successors in order were the Revs. Frederic A. Hamilton and Carl Longbrake, each of whom remained about one year; Samuel H. Edgcumbe, who served from 1909 to 1912, and Clarence H. Heskett, who served the greater part of the time from 1912 to 1917. The present pastor is Rev. Iman Wisse.

Immanuel Church can trace its origin to the establishment of a Union Sunday School, opened on April 4, 1886, in a school house just south of the old fair grounds. In connection with the school, usual church services were conducted by invited ministers of the city. In April, 1888, those who habitually worshiped here addressed a formal invitation to the Westminster Church to incorporate this enterprise as its mission, and take charge of it. This plan met with favor, and very soon afterward said church erected a substantial and commodious chapel upon a choice site of 150 feet square, presented for the purpose by a gentleman of Brooklyn, N. Y. On Sept. 11, 1889, the mission having grown to sufficient size, the church organization was effected. The Rev. George Reynolds, who had been in charge of the mission since July 1, was then elected pastor, and the above church name adopted. Rev. Harvey E. Kilmer is now serving the church as pastor.

North Park has a church organization which holds meetings in the school house. It has no pastor.

#### THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

The Lutheran Church did not gain as early a foothold in Grand Rapids as some of the other denominations, but its growth has been rapid, as has been the case with other churches. The first Lutheran Church was organized under the auspices of the Missouri synod in 1856. The Grand Rapids society, which was called "St. Immanuel's Church," was incorporated June 15, 1856. The building of a small church edifice was begun in September, 1857, and finished early in 1858. Two years after its organization dissension arose in the ranks of the members over questions of church doctrine and government

and a portion of the congregation withdrew and organized the German Methodist Church on the West Side, now on Scribner street. Again, in 1880, factional differences split the congregation and part of the members withdrew and organized the German Church of St. John, on Mt. Vernon avenue. In 1889 and 1890 the edifice now occupied by Immanuel's congregation, at the corner of Michigan street and Division avenue, was erected. Rev. Bruno Poch, who was called to the pastorate in 1909, is still serving the congregation. Immanuel's Church is today the only Lutheran congregation in Grand Rapids under the jurisdiction of the Missouri synod.

The Swedish Evangelical Bethlehem Church was organized as the result of the efforts of Carl Nordberg, a sea captain who came here from New York or Boston in 1871. He forthwith zealously interested himself in the religious welfare of his Swedish countrymen here. He boarded in a Swedish family by the name of Hempel, and in their dwelling gathered his countrymen for religious services. Soon afterward, different ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustinian Synod of America, residing at Chicago and elsewhere, were induced to visit Grand Rapids for missionary work two or three times a year. During one of these visits by the Rev. P. Erikson, of Chicago, and under his direction, on April 25, 1873, sixteen members organized and were incorporated under the name of Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church. Until 1874 the meetings were held at private residences, and for a time in the German Lutheran Church, at the corner of Michigan street and Division avenue, but in this year an edifice of their own was dedicated. Before many years had elapsed it became apparent that a more commodious structure was necessary, and on Aug. 25, 1889, the cornerstone of the present church was laid with impressive ceremonies. The new church was ready for occupancy Dec. 22 of the same year. Since 1916 its pastor has been the Rev. Oscar A. Henry.

As before stated, St. John's German Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized as the result of disaffection in the membership ranks of St. Immanuel's. A house of worship was completed and dedicated in June, 1881, the location being at 348 Mt. Vernon avenue. Rev. F. Robert Schreiber is the present efficient pastor of the society.

Of the two English speaking Lutheran churches in the city, Trinity Church is the oldest. Under the direction of Rev. C. J. Keifer work was begun in June, 1896. So successful was his work that on Dec. 9 of the same year the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized, and in 1898 its house of worship was erected, at the southeast corner of Crescent street and Bostwick avenue. The other English Lutheran Church is Hope Evangelical, organized in 1914, at 903 Scribner avenue, of which Rev. Emil L. Schwankowsky is pastor.

#### THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH.

In the sketch given on another page of the Second Reformed Church, mention is made of the secession of its pastor, Rev. H. G. Klyn, who, together with a large number of followers, left the Reformed Church on Sunday, Jan. 27, 1857. Very soon afterward this flock was organized as the "Holland Reformed Church," was later known as the Spring Street Holland Christian Reformed Church,



then as the Commerce Street Christian Reformed Church, and now its official name is the First Christian Reformed Church. The first pastor, the Rev. H. G. Klyn, ministered to them for the short space of eight months, when the Godfearing but unstable man was prevailed upon to return to the Reformed denomination. But his followers remained and soon afterward built a frame church on the northwest corner of Ionia and Island streets. In 1863, Rev. W. H. Van Leeuwen, pursuant to the call of the Grand Rapids church, came from the Netherlands to shepherd the seceders. He served till 1867. In the last named year the congregation, which meanwhile had increased considerably through immigration, built a new brick church on Spring street, now Commerce avenue, between Island and Oakes streets. Rev. Van Leeuwen was succeeded by Rev. R. Duiker, who served from 1867 till 1872. He was followed by Rev. G. E. Boer, who came in 1873 and resigned in 1876, to occupy the chair of professor in the theological school of the denomination. Rev. J. Kremer was pastor from 1877 to 1879, when he followed the example of his predecessors, Klyn and Duiker, in joining the Reformed Church. But two years afterward, in 1881, a new pastor was secured in the Rev. J. H. Vos, who remained with the congregation longer than all before him combined, until 1900, when he became pastor emeritus. The same year he left, the Rev. T. Vander Ark took his place and filled it until March 26, 1905. The Rev. G. J. Haan was pastor in 1906 and 1907, and in 1908 the Rev. Peter Ekster was called and has remained in the pastorate ever since. In 1911 the property on Commerce avenue was sold and a new church edifice was erected at 650 Bates street, the dedication ceremonies taking place on March 21, 1912.

The Christian Reformed Church of Coldbrook is the second oldest of the Christian Reformed congregations of Grand Rapids. It is located on the northwest corner of Legrand street and Taylor avenue. It was organized Sept. 25, 1875, as the Fourth Reformed Church. Its first house of worship being completed, the new congregation, numbering thirty families, called the Rev. L. I. Hulst, of Danforth, Ill., who was installed Jan. 23, 1876. Disagreeing with the General Synod upon the question of tolerating Freemasons in the denomination, on Sept. 8, 1881, the congregation by a very large majority vote separated from the Reformed Church. The next year it joined the denomination to which the First Church belonged, then known as "Holland Christian Reformed Church." The Coldbrook people succeeded in retaining their church property and Rev. L. I. Hulst continued to shepherd them faithfully until April, 1906, when he was succeeded by the Rev. J. J. Hemenge, who served from December, 1907, until August, 1913. The Rev. Y. P. DeJong was called in January, 1914, and served until November, 1917, since which time the congregation has been temporarily without a pastor. In 1909 and 1910 a new church edifice was built at the corner of Legrand street and Taylor avenue, the dedicatory services being held in May, 1910.

The Eastern avenue congregation is the oldest daughter of the First Church. Early in 1877 the First Church consistory erected a building, 40x50 feet, on the present site, the northeast corner of Bemis street and Eastern avenue. On Sept. 15, 1879, eighty families united in forming a new congregation, known then as the East Street



Church. In the fall of 1881 the Rev. J. Post, a graduate of the Grand Rapids Theological School, was ordained as the first pastor of the young congregation. He served very successfully until 1887, when, on June 27, he was succeeded by Rev. S. B. Sevensma. Under the latter's ministry the present church edifice was built. Different revival waves swept over the church in Rev. Sevensma's pastorate, which was terminated by his death May 6, 1900. On Sept. 4, 1900, the present pastor, Rev. Johannes Groen, was installed.

The Alpine avenue congregation was organized May 25, 1881, as a second offshoot of the First Church, which had already erected a house of worship, 36x62 feet, for its use. The first pastor was Rev. W. H. Frieling, installed Nov. 26, 1882. He labored diligently till the spring of 1886, when failing health compelled him to leave his flock, which meanwhile had increased from thirty to about two hundred families. On Sept. 5, 1886, the Rev. P. Ekster was installed. A new edifice was built on the old site, southeast corner of Alpine avenue and Eleventh street, and it was dedicated March 17-20, 1904. Rev. Ekster preached his farewell sermon Oct. 29, 1905. He was succeeded in December by Rev. S. Volbeda, who remained until 1911, and then was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. John Van Lonkhutzen.

The LaGrave avenue congregation is the oldest Christian Reformed Church in the West which uses the American language exclusively in all its religious services. On Feb. 24, 1887, the organization took place in Luce's Hall on Monroe avenue. Soon afterward this place was rented for Sunday services for one year and Rev. J. Y. DeBaun was called as pastor. He was installed May 15, 1887. Ground was secured on LaGrave street, between Oakes and Cherry streets, and on it a substantial church building of solid brick was erected. The edifice was dedicated June 17, 1888. In 1892 the church regretted to see its first and beloved pastor return to the East, he preaching his farewell sermon March 27. However, his place was soon taken by Rev. S. I. VanderBeek, of Paterson, N. J., who was installed May 8, 1892. He labored successfully at first, but after two or three years the financial panic of the time and other unfortunate circumstances impeded him in his work and he resigned, in October, 1898. On June 4, 1899, Rev. Dr. Henry Beets, since 1895 stationed in Sioux Center, Ia., his first charge, was duly installed, and remained until March 21, 1915, being succeeded, on July 3, 1915, by Rev. William Stuart, the present pastor.

The southeast corner of Franklin street and Oakland avenue is the location of the Franklin street congregation. In the summer of 1886 the First Church consistory built a house of worship and held regular Sunday services and catechetical meetings there. The enterprise being successful, it was deemed wise to organize the people of the vicinity into a separate church. This was done March 8, 1887. A parsonage on the adjoining corner was built and soon occupied by the Rev. W. R. Smidt, of Rotterdam, Kan., who was installed Dec. 23, 1888. He ministered to this church until November, 1902, when he departed for the West. The congregation secured a new pastor in Rev. W. D. Vanderwerp, who was installed May 8, 1903. He remained but a short time, however, and was succeeded in 1907 by Rev.



Lambertus Veltkamp, who has continued in the pastorate ever since.

The West Leonard congregation is a daughter of the Alpine Avenue Church. Its fine brick church building is located at 1057 Leonard street. On May 26, 1889, the people which met in a former house of worship on Crosby street were organized into a separate and independent church. The Rev. G. Broene, its first pastor, was installed Oct. 15, 1889, and labored faithfully until May 5, 1904, when a stroke of paralysis incapacitated him. This led to his resignation in August, 1904. His successor was Rev. F. Doezema, who served until 1915, when he was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. Rienk B. Kuiper. The present church edifice was erected in 1909.

The Oakdale Park Church is so called because located in that suburb, on the corner of Millard street and Butler avenue. It was organized May 22, 1890, as an offshoot of the Eastern Avenue Church. Rev. G. D. DeHaan, a graduate of the theological school, was ordained and installed as the first pastor in September, 1891. He served very successfully till cancer ended his useful life, Aug. 20, 1895. Rev. F. M. Ten Hoor succeeded him, serving from 1896 till 1900, when he assumed the duties of a professorship in the local seminary. The third pastor was Rev. H. M. Vander Ploeg, who served from April, 1901, to Dec. 6, 1903. The building, erected in 1890, was blown down by a destructive storm March 24, 1904, but the congregation, far from being disheartened, at once began to erect a larger and better building on the site of the destroyed one. Meanwhile, Rev. L. Berkhof was installed as pastor, Aug. 14, 1904, in the theological school building, which served as a meeting place during the building period. On Feb. 8, 1905, the new edifice was dedicated. Rev. William P. Van Wyk is the present pastor.

The Grandville avenue congregation was organized in September, 1891, largely of people belonging to the Franklin Street Christian Reformed Church. Thirty-eight families joined at the start and soon began negotiations for the purchase of the Universalist Church building on Pearl street, between Ottawa and Ionia avenues. That house of worship was purchased in November, 1891, and of its material a church edifice was built at 1537 Grandville avenue. Rev. W. Greve was the first pastor, laboring from 1893 till 1896, when failing health compelled him to resign. He was succeeded by the Rev. E. R. Haan, installed in October, 1896. Death terminated Mr. Haan's useful work Sept. 1, 1898. The Rev. J. W. Brink labored here from 1900 till 1904, and he was succeeded by the Rev. J. Timmermann, who was installed June 16, 1905. He served until 1909, when he was succeeded by Rev. Evart Breen, and the latter was succeeded in 1915 by the Rev. Roelf L. Haan. The present pastor, installed in 1917, is the Rev. Ymen P. DeJong.

The Dennis avenue congregation is the second daughter of the Eastern Avenue Church. Organized Feb. 6, 1893, it chose as its first elders, T. Doezema and J. Katsma, and as deacons, R. Bolt and S. Tolk. At first services were held in a store building on Fulton street, near Diamond avenue, but steps were taken soon to erect a house of worship on lots purchased on the east side of Dennis avenue, near Hermitage street. The matter was pushed and on July 30, 1893, a spacious church, 95x45 feet, was dedicated. A parsonage was built



soon afterward for its first pastor, Rev. E. Vander Vries, who served from 1895 to 1902. He was succeeded April 9, 1903, by the Rev. J. B. Hoekstra, who served until Oct. 10, 1909. Rev. J. A. Kett was installed as the latter's successor, Aug. 15, 1910, and served until Feb. 22, 1914, and he was succeeded Aug. 5, 1914, by the present pastor, the Rev. Henry Danhof, who labors with encouraging results.

The Broadway Christian Reformed Church is the second one in Grand Rapids of that denomination to employ the American language in all of its congregational services. It was organized June 26, 1893, mostly of people belonging to the Alpine Avenue Church. At first the meetings were held in the Baptist Church on Scribner street, but in 1894 a house of worship was erected at 1142 Broadway avenue. A pastor was secured in Rev. G. D. DeMott, who labored from May, 1895, till May, 1899, when he resigned, his work not being as successful as wished for. The struggling flock of about forty-five families remained shepherdless until the fall of 1900, when Rev. M. J. Bosma, just graduated from the theological school, was installed. His work was blessed to such an extent that a larger building was needed. The old one was demolished and on its site a new one erected, dedicated Dec. 8, 1904. Rev. Bosma served until 1908, and then the congregation was without a pastor until 1909, when John W. Brink was installed. He was succeeded in 1912 by Rev. Edward J. Tanis, the present pastor.

The Burton Heights Christian Reformed Church was organized June 8, 1905, nearly exclusively of members of the Lagrave Avenue Church, and, like it, is American speaking. Its first Sabbath services were held in the Feakin Memorial M. E. Church, at the corner of Griggs avenue and Buchanan street, in which the organization also took place. Lots had been purchased beforehand, at 2106 Horton avenue, and on them a temporary house of worship, 28x40 feet, was built within three weeks' time. It was dedicated in July, 1905, and served the congregation until the present commodious structure was erected. Rev. Dr. Henry Beets is the present pastor.

The other Christian Reformed Churches in Grand Rapids are Bethel (English), at the foot of Shamrock street, Rev. Gerrit Hoeksema, pastor; Creston, 238 Spencer street, Rev. Karst Bergsma, pastor; Noland Avenue (English), southeast corner of Watkins street and Noland avenue, Rev. H. Henry Meeter, pastor; Sherman Street, 958 Sherman street, no pastor; and Twelfth Street, corner of Twelfth street and Tamarack avenue, no pastor.

#### THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH.

For the past sixty years there has been continuously in Grand Rapids a society practicing the doctrines of Universalism, and the efforts have not been unsuccessful. In 1858 the people interested in that faith came together and held meetings in Luce's Hall, at the corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets, where the Herpolsheimer building now stands. At first the services were conducted by Rev. H. L. Hayward, and in 1862 Rev. A. W. Mason became regularly installed as pastor. During the two years of his pastorate the church grew in numbers and prominence. From 1864 to 1868 no stated services were held, and then an edifice was erected on Pearl street, between



Ionia and Ottawa avenues, and a pastor was secured in the person of Rev. L. J. Fletcher, who remained until June, 1870. A formal church organization was effected with 125 members. The Rev. W. C. Brooks succeeded Mr. Fletcher in June, 1870, and was in turn succeeded by the Rev. Richmond Fisk, D. D., in 1872. The latter became exceedingly popular as an orator, but he fled the city in November, 1874, after confessing unlawful amours. Rev. Charles Fluhrer, D. D., was installed in the pastorate in October, 1875, and soon became highly esteemed by his people. In 1894, Dr. Fluhrer was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Illman, but not until the former had inspired the society to build a handsome new edifice of red sandstone, at the corner of Sheldon avenue and Oakes street. Mr. Illman was succeeded in 1900 by Rev. Leslie W. Sprague, a Unitarian minister, who officiated for three years and was known throughout the city as an unusually brilliant speaker. The church was without a pastor for over a year and the pulpit was ably supplied by Rev. Caroline Bartlett Crane, of Kalamazoo. Rev. George Eliot Cooley was then chosen and began preaching Sept. 1, 1902. He served until 1907, when he was succeeded by Rev. Howard B. Bard, who served until 1913. The congregation then was without a pastor for a time, the pulpit being supplied by the assistant pastor, Mrs. Myrtle K. Cherryman, and in 1914 Rev. Daniel R. Freeman was installed and has been the pastor up to the present time.

#### NEDERDUITSCH REFORMED CHURCH.

The eldest organization of this name is located at 320 Division avenue. It was organized Nov. 30, 1870, by the Rev. C. Kloppenburg, just from the Netherlands. The first pastor died Sept. 6, 1876. He had indicated C. Vorst as his successor, and that gentleman served from Jan. 11, 1877, until April, 1891, when he returned to the Christian Reformed Church, of which he formerly was an earnest advocate. His successor was the Rev. Vander Spek, called from the Netherlands in 1893. After his death, nine months afterward, the Rev. Wolbers, also from Holland, served from 1896 until 1905. Then for a time the pulpit was unoccupied, until 1906, when Rev. Cornelius Pieneman came from Rotterdam, the Netherlands. He remained until 1910, when the congregation was again without a pastor for a time. In 1912 Rev. Hendrick A. Minderman was installed and has continued to serve until the present time.

The other church of this denomination, located at 1044 Turner avenue, dates from the year 1876. For eleven years it met in a hall on West Bridge street. From 1883 until October, 1887, Elder M. Donker stately read the sermons and conducted two Sabbath services. In October, 1887, the Rev. T. Meysters became its first pastor. His preaching added many to their numbers, and in the fall of that year the congregation bought the school grounds and frame school building at 1046 Turner avenue. The building was remodeled for religious purposes, a consistory room was added at the east side, and the building was used for church purposes until 1908, when it was razed and on the same site a brick edifice was erected. The congregation was organized Dec. 10, 1887. Rev. Meysters died in 1891 and was succeeded by Rev. K. Werner, installed July 30, 1893. He died

in October, 1894, and was succeeded by Rev. T. Hager, who served from June, 1896, until September, 1913. The present pastor, Rev. Jacob C. Wielhoumer, was installed Dec. 12, 1915.

### JUDAISM IN GRAND RAPIDS.

There is no record to show that the religion of the Jews took obvious root here prior to 1871. The turbulent times in Germany which sent so many Germans to America, in 1848, also had their influence later in bringing to Grand Rapids a considerable number of Jews, so that on Oct. 2, 1871, a meeting was held at the residence of Benjamin Geis, at No. 1 Bronson street (now Crescent street). A religious society was there organized, and it held its public meetings in Peirce's Concert Hall on old Canal street. On Sept. 1, 1875, they removed to Godfrey's Block, second floor, on Ionia street, one door south of Monroe. In 1882 a building for public worship was erected at the corner of Fountain and Ransom streets. In time the growth of the congregation and the differences of opinion regarding forms of worship made it essential that a separation occur, and consequently some fifteen men and their families seceded from Temple Emanuel and dedicated, at 428 Scribner avenue, an edifice for the Ahvath Ahem congregation. The Congregation Beth Israel, at 438 Ottawa avenue, was organized in 1894.

### CHURCH OF CHRIST—DISCIPLES.

The first church in Grand Rapids of this denomination was organized in July, 1874, with nineteen members. For several months the infant congregation met for worship at the homes of members, but early in 1875 the Swedenborgian Church building, at the corner of Lyon street and Division avenue, was rented, and the Rev. S. E. Pearre, D. D., was secured as the first pastor. With the exception of one year, during which they occupied the old brick house of worship vacated by the Westminster Presbyterian Church, and which stood on the northeast corner of the present postoffice site, the congregation had the use of the Swedenborgian house until September, 1887, when they entered their own. Dr. Pearre had the pleasure of witnessing some growth of his charge during his pastorate of a little over a year. His successor, the Rev. J. S. Hughes, served but six months, when a vacancy of nearly a year ensued. Early in 1878 the Rev. E. D. Butler, of Detroit, began his year of successful labor, at the close of which the church was again dependent upon visiting pastors or the lay services of its members, chiefly those of Dr. Whitfield. However, in May, 1880, they rejoiced in the advent of a pastor, the Rev. J. H. Hammond, whose four years among them accomplished much for the development of the church. The membership numbered 160 when he resigned, in 1884. In December following the Rev. W. F. Richardson came as their pastor and remained until Feb. 1, 1890. In the same year Rev. W. J. Russell became pastor and preserved a wholesome and healthy condition of the church. Succeeding him, the Rev. Errett Gates became the pastor and under his pastorate the membership grew stronger in understanding from his educational thoughts and work. He resigned, however, after three years of labor



in the church, to assume educational pursuits. Rev. E. B. Widger then served for one year, after which Rev. F. P. Arthur entered the service, in May, 1899. He served the congregation until 1907, when he was succeeded by Frank C. Aldinger. The latter remained until 1909, being then succeeded by Ellis B. Barnes, who served only one year. In 1910 Thomas H. Adams was called to the pastorate, but after a couple of years he resigned and the congregation was without a pastor until 1913, when the present pastor, Rev. William V. Nelson, was installed.

The Franklin Street Church edifice was dedicated in December, 1901, the building having been erected largely through the earnest efforts of F. P. Arthur, pastor of the First Christian Church, and the children of Dr. I. J. Whitfield. Rev. W. E. Colegrove supplied for a few months, until Rev. Frank Green, who was at the time a student in Bethany College, W. Va., was able to take charge. Mr. Green began his work in June, 1902. Rev. A. L. Martin succeeded him in November, 1903, and continued until April, 1904. Rev. W. A. Bellamy began his ministry with the church the first of July, 1904, and served until 1909, when he was succeeded by Rev. Homer E. Sala, who served in the pastorate about two years. The latter was succeeded in 1911 by Rev. Martin L. Buckley, who served until 1912, when he was succeeded by Rev. Thomas H. Adams. Mr. Adams remained as pastor until 1914, and then was succeeded by David L. Dunkelberger, who only served about one year, and then the congregation was without a pastor until 1916, when the present pastor, Rev. Arthur W. Higby, was installed.

Another congregation of this denomination is the Plainfield Avenue Church of Christ, the church edifice being located at 315 Sweet street, and its present pastor is Rev. John C. Neece.

### THE UNITARIAN CHURCH.

Prior to the regular organization of the Unitarian society in Grand Rapids in 1884, meetings were held by the members of the faith then resident in Grand Rapids, in the Ladies' Literary Club Rooms, on Pearl street. In the year above named the society was organized and held its public meetings in Powers' Opera House for two years. Plans and specifications were drawn, funds were solicited, and a considerable sum was spent in laying the foundation walls for a church edifice on Fulton street, near Lagrave avenue, but dissatisfaction arose and the project was dropped. The first regular Unitarian minister in the city was the Rev. Henry Powers, of Manchester, N. H., who assisted in the organization of the society. He was succeeded by Rev. John E. Roberts, and he in turn by the Rev. Mr. Cook. But interest seemed to diminish and for a time public worship was abandoned. An occasional supply preached for the society until 1890, when Rev. Miss Mila Tupper became pastor and served for three years. In 1893, Rev. H. Digby Johnston was called and remained a year, preaching in the Ladies' Literary Club house. After this pastorate, which ended in 1894, the society was supplied for a few Sundays by Rev. Mr. Gould, secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference. Being without a church home and regular pastor, and with interest failing, the society soon ceased to hold services.

The only other Unitarian organization in Grand Rapids is the Holland Unitarian Church, at the northwest corner of Michigan street and Ionia avenue, and at present they are without a pastor.

#### THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH.

The State of Michigan constitutes one district of the German Evangelical Synod of North America. The first church of this denomination was organized through the efforts of Rev. H. Schuknecht, a German minister from Leighton, Allegan County, who organized the church May 1, 1883, with nineteen members. The congregation worshiped regularly in Koch's Hall on West Bridge street, and enjoyed the ministrations of neighboring clergy of their association until the Rev. L. V. Soldan was settled as their pastor, in April, 1884. The building of a house of worship was at once begun, the cornerstone being laid Aug. 3, 1884, by the Revs. H. Schneider, of Ionia, and L. Brown, of Caledonia, and on Oct. 19 of the same year, the people rejoiced in the dedication of an edifice of brick. The present pastor of this church is Rev. William H. Watson. The Second Evangelical Church is located at the corner of Griggs street and Horton avenue, with Rev. Charles F. Smith as pastor.

#### THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS.

The society of Seventh Day Adventists had their first advocate in Elder H. W. Miller. It was in 1886 that he came to Grand Rapids and started holding meetings, and in the same year a tract and missionary society was organized to spread the faith, and this resulted in the acquisition of several members. The church was organized in September, 1887, with about forty constituent members. The present home of the society at 328 Cass avenue was erected in 1912. Rev. Willie H. Sherrig is in charge of the congregation.

#### THE UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH.

The earliest action looking toward the establishment of a United Brethren Church in Grand Rapids was in the fall of 1889, when I. J. Bear and family and G. H. Kirtland and family removed to this city. An organization was formally effected Jan. 19, 1890, the General Board of Missions not only recognizing the infant society with a formal indorsement, but also aiding with practical financial support. In 1909 the congregation erected a fine church edifice at the southwest corner of Stewart street and Buchanan avenue. The present pastor is the Rev. Charles E. Pilgrim. The Second United Brethren Church is located at the southeast corner of Porter and Oak Lawn avenues (Wyoming Park), but at present it has no pastor.

#### THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH.

In the year 1885 the first interest in Christian Science was aroused in Grand Rapids through the healing of a number of persons of various conditions of disease. About Jan. 1, 1886, a student of Mrs. Eddy came to the city, taught a class, and remained as a practitioner and teacher of Christian Science. Interest grew until the rapidly in-



creasing band of believers commenced weekly meetings for the purpose of making a systematic study of the Bible and the text-book of Christian Science, "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer and founder of Christian Science. Quickly following this move, a society of those loyal to the teachings of "Science and Health" was formed and regular Sunday services were established in 1889. The church was legally incorporated Oct. 20, 1893, with eight charter members. Sermons were delivered each Sunday, as in other evangelical churches, until 1895, when Mrs. Eddy, the leader of the Christian Science movement, instituted the Bible and "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" as the impersonal pastor for all Christian Science Churches. The Grand Rapids church immediately adopted this system, wherein the sermons, consisting of passages selected by a committee from these two inseparable books are read by two Readers, a man and a woman, thus giving the same sermon each Sunday in every church of the denomination throughout the world. In October, 1895, a Sunday School was organized with six members. The church congregation occupied for short periods, Good Templars' Hall, the Ladies' Literary Club house, and the St. Cecelia Auditorium, changing location as the need for improved conditions appeared. In January, 1901, a building site was secured at a cost of \$8,000, the amount being paid that year. On July 20, 1902, the decision to build a church edifice was made and steps were taken to raise the necessary funds. Ground was broken Oct. 20, 1902, and the cornerstone was laid June 10, 1903. The edifice was completed at a cost, including furnishings and pipe organ, of about \$75,000. It was formally opened for services Feb. 12, 1905, but as Christian Science Churches are not dedicated until paid for, the dedicatory exercises did not take place until Oct. 14, 1906, when these requirements were complied with. The missionary activities of the church began with the opening of a free public reading room in 1891, in conformity with the universal custom of the Christian Science movement. This reading room was first placed in a small office building, later removed to the church edifice, and finally located in a commodious building in the center of the business district. A department for the distribution of free Christian Science literature was established, and through this effort thousands of people are yearly being supplied with religious information and instruction. The local church actively supports the Board of Lectureship of the Mother Church, in Boston, which missionary enterprise is now reaching practically every nation of the world. Its benevolent enterprises have been many, as it quickly responds to all calls for assistance as presented in calamities, such as floods, earthquakes, fire and water, as well as in local efforts, to relieve human suffering by activity in every humanitarian endeavor for the world's relief and evangelization.

#### OTHER CHURCHES.

There is one spiritualistic congregation in Grand Rapids, which holds regular services—the Church of Truth, whose place of worship is at 26 Shelby street.

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints meets at 1204 Division avenue. The elder in charge of the congregation is E. K. Evans.

The Greek Orthodox Church maintains two organizations in Grand Rapids. St. George's, the Syrian congregation, meets at 219 Williams street, with Rev. Philipos Abou-Assaly as pastor, and St. John's, the Russian congregation, meets at the northeast corner of Veto street and National avenue, with Rev. Anthony Diachenko as pastor.

The Church of the Brethren (Dunkard) meets at the corner of Burton street and Gardner avenue, with the Rev. Ellis F. Caslow as pastor, and the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene meets at the southwest corner of Griggs street and Buchanan avenue, with Rev. Levi H. Humphrey as pastor.

The other churches, missions, etc., may be named as follows: Apostolic Church, 709 Shamrock; Apostolic Faith Assembly, 515 Division avenue; Apostolic Faith Mission, 957 Ottawa avenue; Avery Chapel, 920 Lyon; Bradford Street Mission, 441 Bradford; City Rescue Mission, 56-60 Market avenue, Rev. Melvin E. Trotter, superintendent; Edgewood Baptist Mission, southeast corner of Edgewood and Eleanor avenues; Fairmount Park Mission, southeast corner of Graceland and Wartrous avenues; First Christian Reformed Church Mission, 1220 Division avenue; Gospel Hall, 432 College avenue, Gospel Mission, 348 Bartlett street; Grant Street Mission, 320 Grant street; Holiness Mission, 115 Division avenue; Salvation Army, 242 Pearl street; Volunteers of America Gospel Mission, 225 Bond avenue; "Way of Life" Mission, 715 Division avenue, and Whosoever Mission, 640 Burton street.

#### MISCELLANEOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

The organization of the Young Men's Christian Association in Grand Rapids was the result, here as elsewhere, of the wave of religious revival which swept over the United States and Canada, in 1857 and 1858, although actual organization in Grand Rapids did not take place until several years later. The meeting called to organize the Grand Rapids branch was held on June 6, 1866, and in a comparatively short time the membership had reached more than 200. There was no general secretary during the early years of the association, but rooms were maintained in Mills & Clancy's Hall. In 1867, and for three years subsequent, rooms were occupied at 30 old Canal street. In 1870 legal incorporation was effected and in 1871 the Association took rooms on Monroe avenue, about opposite the site of the Widdicomb Building. An attempt made in 1872 to obtain a building of its own failed, but in July of that year it succeeded in securing a general secretary, John Horner, who served until October, 1873. A new constitution was adopted in 1874 to widen the scope of its usefulness, and open-air services and the jail work were undertaken. In July the Rev. L. H. Pearce, who had for two years been pastor of the Second Street M. E. Church, became general secretary and remained until September, 1875. In January, 1875, a vast improvement was made by occupying nice quarters in the Ledyard Block. In 1876 the Centennial celebration was marked by a specially interesting rehearsal of the history of the first decade of the Association, by Hon. M. S. Crosby, who showed that in those years over \$20,000 had been expended in the work, besides \$1,862.92 expended



in the relief work during its first four years. Just before the close of 1876 the Fifth State convention of the Young Men's Christian Associations was entertained here. The Rev. E. A. Spence was engaged as general secretary in February, 1877, but was succeeded before the end of the year by A. B. Carrier. The latter served two years, after which there was a vacancy in the office and a curtailment of the work until November, 1880, when L. P. Rowland, formerly State secretary, assumed charge. In February, 1883, the Association moved to more inviting quarters in the Godfrey Block on Ionia avenue, one door south of Monroe avenue, and in March a work for boys was begun. In the autumn of 1884 Mr. Rowland resigned. He was succeeded in April, 1885, by R. M. Beattie. In 1886 the Association removed to the northwest corner of Pearl street and Ottawa avenue, where Julius Berkey had erected a temporary building for its use. In September, 1888, the site for a Y. M. C. A. building at the corner of Pearl street and Ionia avenue was purchased, and in October of the same year the headquarters were again removed from the corner of Pearl street and Ottawa avenue to an old dwelling on the site purchased. In 1892 the building was erected on this site and at the time it was thought to be adequate to all demands. But the rapid growth of the city and the increased interest in Y. M. C. A. work caused larger quarters to be a crying need, and the magnificent building which at present houses the Association was completed, in December, 1914, and occupied in the early part of the year following.

The Grand Rapids branch of the Young Woman's Christian Association was organized at a meeting held in the early part of 1900. The charter was issued on June 16, 1900, and in that month a room on Pearl street, where the Board of Trade is at present located, was secured for the use of the Association. The society grew so rapidly that larger quarters became necessary, and in September, 1900, new rooms were opened in the White Block on Monroe avenue. In September, 1907, the Association took possession of rooms in the Shephard Building, on Fountain street, and that place has since been its home.

What is known as the Open Forum is maintained at All Soul's Church, where weekly Sunday afternoon meetings are held. Various subjects are discussed and the privilege is given to ask questions.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EARLY SCHOOLS — HIGH SCHOOLS — MANUAL TRAINING — NORMAL TRAINING SCHOOL — KINDERGARTENS — PUBLIC LIBRARY — PUBLIC MUSEUM — SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF — GRAND RAPIDS ACADEMY — COUNTRY SCHOOLS — PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Baxter, in his "History of the City of Grand Rapids," says: "Undoubtedly the first educational institution within the present limits of the city was the Slater Baptist Indian Mission on the West Side, with its attendant Indian school, to which certain of the white children were sent for a time, crossing the river in canoes. The earliest school





OLD STONE SCHOOL HOUSE

Built 1849—Torn Down 1868. Same Site As Present Junior High School.





exclusively for white children was one kept by Miss Emily Guild, afterward Mrs. Emily Baxter, in the spring of 1835, in the building on Waterloo street later known as 'the old yellow warehouse,' that was begun for a Catholic church on the west side of the river, but which Louis Campau caused to be moved across to the east side. It is undoubtedly true that the curriculum of this early school was not exceedingly comprehensive nor the discipline very rigid, as the regular pupils were for the most part children of Joel and Edward Guild, and consequently either the small sisters or cousins of their teacher."

Some of the earlier schools were taught at what is now the city's favorite suburban resort, Reed's Lake. In 1834 the settlement there was nearly equal in importance to that at the Rapids, and in the winter of that year a school for the families of the settlement was taught in the upper part of a log house by two young girls—Miss Euphemia Davis, daughter of Ezekiel Davis, and Miss Sophia Reed, daughter of Lewis Reed. This school was maintained for the greater part of a year. In 1835 a school house, probably the first in Grand River Valley, was built near the lake, and the school was kept during the winter by a young man named Francis Prescott, who afterward married Miss Bond, a teacher in Slater's Indian Mission, and became a Baptist minister. In the spring of 1835 the family of Darius Winsor moved from their log cabin on the bank of the river at Ionia into the lower story of a new frame house just built by Mr. Winsor, in Grand Rapids, on the corner of Fountain street and Ottawa avenue. The house was not completed when they moved in, lacking doors and windows, the stairway leading into the upper story having no backs to the steps. Nevertheless, the Winsors began keeping house downstairs, and later in the season a Miss Day, from the Slater Indian Mission, kept school upstairs, little Miss Adelaide Winsor (afterward Mrs. Adelaide Henderson) and some eight or nine other children attending and conning their lessons diligently while seated upon the flat side of the slabs, with legs inserted in the rounded under side, which at that time were the most improved school seats manufactured in the embryo Furniture City. Miss Day taught this school for about three months, and then resigned and returned to her former home in Massachusetts.

During the year following the establishment of this school, a large number of immigrants to the West located in Grand Rapids, and in 1836 two or three other schools were opened. One of these was by Miss Sophia Page, afterward wife of Judge Daniel Bacon of Monroe, the sessions being held in a new barn a little to the southeast across the street from the present Morton House. The others were by Daniel Smith, of Cazenovia, N. Y., and Miss Mary Hinsdill, who taught two schools during the winter of 1836-37, in the National Hotel, then kept by Miss Hinsdill's brother. Mr. Smith's school was for young men and Miss Hinsdill's for young women, the one occupying a lower and the other an upper room of the hotel. These early schools were subscription or pay schools, as at that time no public revenue had been provided for the maintenance of public schools, except that derived from the school lands, and this was little or nothing, because land was so plentiful and so cheap that it was fully a generation before the lands donated for school purposes would command a price at



all commensurate with the educational needs of the community. Even then the "sixteenth section" was frequently sold for a mere pittance of what it would bring today.

The young folks who enjoy the benefits of the twentieth century schools have but a slight conception of the "advantages" enjoyed by their grandfathers and grandmothers in 1836. The equipment of those early schools was of the most primitive character. The school house was generally a log cabin or cheaply constructed frame shanty, probably 18x24 feet in size, door in one end, a huge fireplace in the other, and two small windows on each side. Often these windows were not more than 24x30 inches in size, and on cloudy days the pupils who occupied seats in the corners or in the center of the room found it a difficult matter to study their books. Long, backless benches were provided for the smaller children, while along the walls under the windows was arranged a broad board for a writing desk. Sometimes small tables with suitable seats were provided for the pupils old enough to write, though tables were regarded as a luxury and the school that could afford them was considered fortunate. The schoolmaster was furnished with a chair, a small deal table, a few books, a bottle of ink and a quill pen, as part of his duties was to "set the copies" in the writing books of the pupils. One of his accomplishments was to know how to make a good quill pen, as steel pens had not yet come into general use. Reading, writing, and arithmetic—sometimes denominated "the three R's"—constituted the principal features of the curriculum, though occasionally an old map would be hung upon the wall and used for general exercises in geography. Text-books were of divers' kinds, written by various authors, so that efficient class work was out of the question, and blackboards were rarely used in the pioneer schools. Yet, notwithstanding these conditions, strong men and women received their most useful early training in the log school house of the frontier.

In 1827 the Legislature of the Territory of Michigan enacted that as soon as twenty families were settled in a town, they should select three commissioners of common schools, who should hold their respective offices for three years, and whose duties should be to lease the school lands and apply the proceeds to the establishment and support of the common schools, and it was under this law that the first school districts were organized. But for several years after this the pioneers were too much engrossed with the material development of the country to give much thought to the subject of education. And besides, no funds amounting to anything could be raised by the sale or lease of the school lands, and if the schools were to be brought to a higher standard it would have to be done by local taxation. But the average citizen, especially a pioneer under such conditions as have already been described, is loath to give his assent to any policy that will largely increase his taxes; hence the houses were log huts or cheap frame shanties, the teachers poorly paid, and the school supplies limited to the least expensive kind.

Baxter's "History of the City of Grand Rapids" (p. 220) says: "May 9, 1835, the first school district within the present limits of Grand Rapids city and township was organized. It was bounded south and eastward by the present limits of the city, westward by

Grand River, and extended northward one mile and a half above the present city line. In the summer of 1837 the affairs of the district were in a condition to warrant the employment of a teacher, and Miss Celestia Hinsdill, of Kalamazoo, Mrs. S. L. Withey's cousin, was a candidate for the position. To William A. Richmond, Charles I. Walker, and Noble H. Finney, school committeemen, and young gentlemen friends of the lady, the law gave the task of ascertaining the extent of her knowledge and fitness for the profession of teaching. The legend says they fulfilled the law to the uttermost, asking her questions innumerable, and both relevant and irrelevant to educational matters, to all of which she gave correct answers except one as to the location of Thunder Bay, that body of water having then been but recently rechristened, and she not having heard of its new name. Notwithstanding this defect in geographical knowledge, Miss Hinsdill was hired to teach the first term of the district school, and she afterward honored one of the gentlemen by accepting his name and becoming Mrs. C. I. Walker. Her term continued through the summer."

The sessions of this first term of the district school were held in a frame building on Prospect Hill, erected by Aaron Sibley and first occupied by him as a dwelling, and which was in later years used as an engine house. In 1839, William I. Blakely built the first school house in the district—and, indeed, the first frame school house within what are now the limits of the city. It was a small structure, situated on the north side of East Fulton street, nearly opposite the end of Jefferson avenue. Joseph B. Galusha, of Rochester, N. Y., and who was a son of Governor Galusha of Vermont, taught school in the new house. Warren W. Weatherly and his brother, O. R. Weatherly, Elijah Marsh, and Thomas B. Cuming successively taught there for several terms, Mr. Cuming being in charge when the building was burned Feb. 22, 1849.

In 1848, this large district was divided, the lower or southern part forming District No. 1, and the northern portion District No. 6, or the Coldbrook district. At the first school meeting of District No. 1, May 6, 1848, James M. Nelson was elected moderator, Stephen Wood director, and W. G. Henry assessor. Several special school meetings were held in 1848, at which the question of erecting a new school house in the district was thoroughly discussed, and at a meeting held on June 24 it was resolved, "That for the erection and completion of a suitable stone school house in this district the sum of \$2,500 be levied and assessed upon the property of the district." A building committee of six was empowered "to act in concert with the proper officers of the district in the disposal of the present site and school buildings, the purchase of a new site, the drawing up of plans and specifications, advertising for and receiving proposals, and letting the job for the construction and completion of a stone school house, which, when completed, shall in no case cost to exceed the sum of \$2,500. At a school meeting held July 15, 1848, the committee recommended "the purchase of lots Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, in Block 8, Dexter Fraction, and the six lots lying and adjoining on the east side in the Hatch addition, as the new school house site." This report was accepted, and after some inquiry into the title of the lots,



the site, which is identical with the present Junior High School grounds, was acquired by the district for the very huge sum of \$300! The director was authorized to receive "proposals for the erection of a stone school house, two stories in height (without a basement), upon the same plan as drawn by Stephen Wood, and as may be seen at the store of Sinclair & King." On Jan. 8, 1849, the committee accepted the proposition of David Burnett for the building of the school house, which was accordingly erected in the following summer and fall. The stone used in its construction was obtained from the bed of Grand River, and the building, although possessing small claim to architectural beauty, was a more substantial and commodious structure than might be supposed when the smallness of the contract price paid for it is considered. The building served well the purpose for which it was designed until 1867, when the growing educational interests of the district demanded better accommodations, and it was pulled down upon the completion of what was long known as the Central High School building. The stone and other building material was sold to various citizens, and the key of the massive door of the old school house is now deposited among the exhibits in the Ryerson Library.

At the annual school meeting, held Sept. 24 of the same year in which the stone school house was built, the district was organized under the union school system, which necessitated the election of four additional trustees, and the following board was chosen: Moderator, Thompson Sinclair; director, H. K. Rose; assessor, Michael Connolly; trustees, W. G. Henry, John Ball, Zenas G. Winsor, and T. H. Lyon. The first term of school under the new system was begun in the new stone school house, Nov. 12, 1849, under the principalship of E. M. Johnson, of Western New York, who was assisted by Miss Hollister (afterward Mrs. William M. Ferry, of Grand Haven), Miss Elizabeth White (afterward Mrs. Whipple), Miss Almira Hinsdill (afterward Mrs. Jones, of Denver Colo.), and Miss Thirza Moore. Mr. Johnson resigned at the close of the first term and was succeeded Feb. 18, 1850, by the Rev. James Ballard. Mr. Ballard, after holding the position three years, gave place to Edward W. Chesebro, who served until 1857, when he was followed by Prof. E. Danforth. At the annual school meeting of 1859, it was voted to grade the schools and establish a high school, which was done under the direction of Prof. Danforth. The first commencement exercises of the high school were held in Luce's Hall at the close of the school year of 1861-62.

In 1860 the custom of giving prizes in the Grand Rapids public schools was introduced by the Hon. T. D. Gilbert, who left in trust the sum of \$2,000, the income from which he directed to be distributed among the boys and girls who acquitted themselves most creditably during the year. The trustees accepted with thanks the generous donation of Mr. Gilbert and pledged themselves to carry out the intentions of the donor to the best of their ability. But by mutual agreement between the Board and Mr. Gilbert the fund was never used, as at first intended, but has been applied toward the purchasing of reference books and scientific and other apparatus for the schools, it being decided that this disposal of the income from the fund would be more beneficial than the other. Thus was founded what has ever since been known as "The Gilbert Trust Fund."



In 1861, Mr. Danforth was succeeded by Edwin A. Strong, who had been a contemporary with the former as a teacher. He continued to hold the office of superintendent until he resigned, in 1870, to take a position in the State Normal school at Oswego, N. Y. After a short stay he returned to this city, and as teacher and principal remained connected with the high school until 1885, when he resigned to accept a professorship in the State Normal School at Ypsilanti. Mr. Strong brought to the schools a mind of rare culture, richly stored with knowledge gained by a life of study, and a Christian character of peculiar purity and beauty. The influence of such a man upon the schools where he taught, and the community of which he was for so many years an honored member, cannot be measured by words.

The first school expressly for white children on the west side of Grand River was taught by Miss Bond, afterward Mrs. Francis Prescott, one of the teachers in the Slater Mission School for Indians. Upon the establishment of a school for white children the settlers placed her in charge in a log school house not far from the bank of the river and a little south of Bridge street. There Miss Bond taught some two dozen pupils, drilling them thoroughly in the three R's and the other elementary branches of the tree of knowledge, from 8 A. M. to 5 P. M., six days in the week for the greater part of a year. She was succeeded by Miss Mary L. Green, who afterward became Mrs. William I. Blakely, and she taught the school the following two summers of 1839 and 1840. This primitive school house served the educational interests of District No. 2 for several years, and later it was succeeded by a small frame building situated a little south of Bridge and east of what is now Scribner avenue. When the population of the district had increased so that still larger accommodations were needed, a larger, one-story frame building was erected on First street, on the site where St. Mary's Catholic Church now stands. Milton S. Littlefield taught in this school for several years. In 1853 the district adopted the Union school organization and the Rev. James Ballard was chosen as the first principal of the newly organized school. In 1854, the frame school house was found inadequate to the growing needs of the district, and Ebenezer Anderson, one of the trustees, was given a contract to erect a new Union school house at the corner of Turner and West Broadway streets. In the following year the new school house was completed. Before the union of the school districts of the city in 1871, two other buildings—the old Turner street and the Jefferson street schools—were erected. W. F. Kent succeeded Mr. Ballard as principal of the school in District No. 2. It was in his administration that the district took advantage of the act of the Legislature, passed in 1859, and graded the school and established a high school, in which algebra, geometry, and the higher branches of study were taught. From September, 1861, until June, 1865, Prof. J. C. Clark, of Port Jervis, N. Y., acted as principal of the school and was assisted in his labors by his wife, who was principal of the primary department. Before the union of the districts, Prof. Kent served another short term as principal, and Prof. Stewart Montgomery, later of Olivet College, was at the head of the schools when the districts were consolidated in 1871.



District No. 6, or the Coldbrook district, as it was commonly called, included all that part of what is now the city which is north of a line midway between Newberry and Mason streets and east of Grand River, and it also extended one mile and a half north of the city limits. Prof. Franklin Everett taught in this district in the winter of 1852-53, and a Miss French taught the school in the following summer. In 1859 the district purchased of C. W. Taylor the present school house site on Leonard street, and Foster Tucker, Judge Davis, Edmund Carrier, Seth Holcomb, and Jesse C. Wyckoff were appointed a building committee to push forward the work of erecting a new school house. The contract was let to W. H. Stewart, and on April 24, 1860, the district accepted the school house built by him. The district enjoyed the advantages of the old Union school organization for some years, and at the annual meeting, Sept. 2, 1867, it was resolved to grade the schools and elect a board of six trustees in accordance with the law of 1859. Among the early teachers in this district were A. J. Tucker and Maria A. Jipson, who taught in 1861 and 1862, and C. W. Borst, who served as principal of the school from 1862 to 1864. Other teachers, before the union of the districts, were Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Bell, Adelaide Tucker, and A. Carrier. Fannie Tucker was principal in 1867.

By an act of the Legislature of Michigan, approved March 15, 1871, it was provided "that the city of Grand Rapids and all contiguous territory which shall hereafter be added thereto, shall constitute one school district, and all public schools therein shall be under the direction and control of the Board of Education hereinafter provided for, and shall be free to all residents of said district over the age of five years." In accordance with this statute, at a public meeting called by Mayor L. H. Randall, in the old council chamber in the Randall Block, April 11, 1871, District No. 2, or the West Side district; District No. 6, or Coldbrook district, and District No. 1 were united, and the first board of education of the city of Grand Rapids was organized from the trustees of the three districts.

Anson J. Daniels became superintendent upon the consolidation of the three districts, in 1871, and of his services at that important era in the history of the schools, A. L. Chubb, president of the Board of Education, had the following to say in his annual report for 1871-72: "I may not omit mentioning in this report the excellent services of our superintendent. He had a great work before him, and it is but simple justice to say that it has been well and faithfully performed. General harmony and concert of action has been secured, and the machinery of our school system, under the recent consolidation, has been put in successful operation. You have, in a practical way, recognized the value of his services. Personally, I desire to acknowledge the many obligations I am under to him for his hearty and ready co-operation in the solution of the many problems incident to the recent change in our school system, and which, in the march of progress, must constantly arise." In February, 1885, after more than a decade's service as superintendent of the schools, Mr. Daniels retired, and was succeeded by I. N. Mitchell.

Under Mr. Mitchell's superintendency the schools received a decided impetus in the direction of more advanced methods of educa-



tion, which originated in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. His was a vigorous mind, looking always into the future and ever on the alert for whatever seemed to promise better than the past—a mind impatient of using a worn-out system out of reverence to its grey hairs. Under his influence many who had become accustomed to face backward turned themselves about and a vast deal of conservatism, which is a good thing when it is not “too much of a good thing,” was thus eliminated from the schools. Chiefly through Mr. Mitchell’s efforts, a kindergarten was established in 1886, in connection with the schools, and maintained for two years, and kindergarten methods were introduced to a limited extent in the primary grades. In 1886, Mr. Mitchell became superintendent of the schools at Fond du Lac, Wis., and was succeeded here by F. M. Kendall, of Jackson, Mich.

As early as 1875, many interested ones recommended the passage of a law compelling children of certain ages to attend school for a specified time each year. Nothing was done for a number of years, but in 1883 there were so many complaints that a large number of children were not in school who ought to be, that the legislature passed an act providing for the establishment of truancy schools for pupils between the ages of seven and sixteen years. In 1884 an ungraded or truant school was established in Grand Rapids in accordance with this statute, and it was opened, Nov. 8, 1884, with an attendance of eight pupils. The number increased until the average attendance for the first year was thirty.

In 1884, the suggestion was made and acted upon that the Grand Rapids schools prepare an exhibit for the educational department of the International Exhibition to be held at New Orleans, in 1885. An appropriation was made to defray the expenses, and the following exhibit was arranged: The regular examination papers were all collected, and the representative work of each grade in each subject, bound uniformly, were forwarded to New Orleans. The work of the preceding year in drawing was also sent, together with a number of wood carvings, done after original designs by the high school pupils. Other features of the exhibit were: two cases of slate work taken from the first and second grade rooms without the foreknowledge of teacher or pupils; several Michigan albums made by the pupils of eighth grade rooms; a collection of photographs of representative school buildings; microscopical drawings from the class in physiology and zoology; a complete set of school blanks and forms; a group of relief maps showing the topography of the State, its geological formation and the distribution of pine timber; a large collection of cards showing the work of the first and second grades in geography, color, form and inventions. This work was done with colored shoe-pegs and small oblong blocks, and was finally presented to the French and Japanese commissioners. A diploma of honor was awarded for the general exhibit.

It was early in Mr. Daniels’ administration that evening schools were introduced. The first evening schools were opened in the fall of 1872, and have since been maintained every winter as part of the school system, for the benefit of those whose employment prevents attendance at school in the daytime. These schools have been well attended, a large proportion of their pupils being Hollanders who



wish to learn the English language, and young men and boys employed during the day in furniture factories. A relatively large number of girls also attend these schools. The sessions of the night school, and also of the ungraded school, were held for a number of years in the old stone mansion formerly occupied by the Peninsular Club, at the corner of Pearl street and Ottawa avenue, on the last fragment of Prospect Hill.

F. M. Kendall served as superintendent from 1887 until 1890, and his successors up to the present time have been as follows: From 1891 to 1898, W. W. Chalmers; 1898 to 1900, F. R. Hathaway; 1901 to 1906, William H. Elson; 1906 to 1918, William A. Greeson, present incumbent. The supervising force in 1917 was composed of the superintendent and one assistant. Truancy officers reported about 2,000 cases of special investigations, most of which were due to parental negligence or willfulness. The total school population of the city was 33,347, of whom 18,995 were enrolled in the public schools. The number of teachers employed was 775, and the amount paid in salaries, including the compensation of teachers in the evening and parochial schools and the Junior college, was \$622,210.57. The value of the city's school property, as reported by the secretary, was as follows: Grounds, \$603,285; buildings, \$2,443,500; furniture, books, and general supplies, \$365,000; trust funds, \$1,500, making a total valuation of \$3,413,285.

### HIGH SCHOOLS

The first action toward the establishment of a high school in Grand Rapids was taken at the annual school meeting, Sept. 26, 1859, under Act No. 161 of the Session Laws of 1859, entitled: "An Act to establish Graded and High Schools." On motion of D. S. Leavitt, the Board was instructed to establish a high school in the district during the current year. Similar action was taken in regard to the West Side schools, but no graduating classes were organized there, the pupils seemingly preferring to finish their courses of study and receive their diplomas at the high school in No. 1 district. District No. 6, known as the Coldbrook District, did not grade its schools until 1867, and no effort was made there to establish a high school.

In 1871, Senator Byron D. Ball secured the passage of an act by the State legislature under which the establishment of a central high school in Grand Rapids was made possible, and the board was given power to erect the necessary buildings, employ teachers, etc. This school was opened in (or rather was a continuation of the former high school) in the First district school building at the corner of Lyon street and Barclay avenue. In 1892, the building now used by the Junior High School was erected and the school was removed there. In 1909 work was begun on the \$400,000 building on the present site, on the north side of Fountain street, near Prospect avenue, and this was completed and ready for occupancy, Feb. 1, 1911. Notwithstanding that this fine new building was in course of construction, it was well understood that it would be inadequate for the rapidly growing city, and agitation was commenced for high schools on the west side and in the south end. In response to the demand, in 1910 an addition was built to the Union school building on the west side, at the



southwest corner of Fourth street and Turner avenue. This is now known as the Union High School. In 1913 it was decided to establish a high school in the south end, and accordingly, in 1914, a fine building was erected on the south side of Hall street, between Salem and Jefferson avenues, and this is now designated as the South High School. In the last annual report of the Board of Education mention is made of a fourth high school now seriously being considered. It will be located in the orthern part of the city and will probably be called the Creston High School. According to this same report the three Grand Rapids high schools and the Junior High School employed 128 teachers and had 2,894 pupils enrolled. All three of the high schools are on the accredited high school list of the University of Michigan.

### MANUAL TRAINING

The first movement toward the introduction of manual training in the Grand Rapids public schools was on April 28, 1891, when the Board of Trade adopted a resolution urging the Board of Education to make some provision for teaching manual training in the school budget for 1892. The Board of Education failed to make any appropriation, however, and in 1896 Superintendent Chalmers ended his report with these significant words: "Manual training has come to be engrafted on our public school system. It has come to stay. It has come to harmonize the physical and intellectual; it has come to make productive all teaching and development, at whatever stage of growth the learner may withdraw from school; it has come to unite the intellectual to the highest physical sense." In October, 1900, the city council approved an appropriation of \$5,000 for manual training and it was introduced during the school year into the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh grades. The classes were started, Jan. 2, 1901, in charge of a director and six assistants, of whom one taught carpentry and joinery, one taught cooking, two knife work, and two sewing. Its introduction marked an event in popular education. George S. Waite was the first supervisor of manual training, beginning his duties in January, 1901. At the close of the school year he resigned and was succeeded by Vinnedge M. Russell. Since then manual training has been a permanent part of the city's school system, being cared for in the upper grades and the high school, with the addition of new apparatus and new departments as the needs have required.

### NORMAL TRAINING SCHOOL

In 1871, a training school for teachers was established in Primary No. 3 (afterward Fountain Street school), in which persons who wished to enter the schools as teachers were drilled in the work before being placed in charge of rooms. This training school was kept up until 1878, when the Board of Education adopted a cadet system, by which each year several cadet teachers were employed at \$200 per annum, each of whom was assigned to some teacher whom she assisted, and by whom she was instructed. In 1891, another training school was opened in the Jefferson Street school and was continued until 1894, when it was transferred to Wealthy Avenue school and continued until June, 1900, when it closed, the establishment of State normal schools rendering the further continuance of the city training school unnecessary.



## KINDERGARTENS

In 1886, the kindergarten system of instruction was introduced in the Grand Rapids schools and was maintained to a limited extent for two years in the primary grades. After a lapse, a kindergarten was established in the annex on the grounds of the Grandville Avenue school, in April, 1889, and Mrs. C. D. Bourke, a teacher of experience in that work, was placed in charge. The demand for admittance was at once greater than the school could accomodate and two kindergartens were in operation throughout the following year. In 1891 that system of education had become so important a factor in the schools of the city that teachers of all grades were desirous of understanding the fundamental idea of the system, and Superintendent Chalmers in his report recommended making it a part of the public school system. The Grand Rapids Kindergarten Association was organized, March 31, 1891, with a "charter list" of thirteen members. The object of the organization at that time was "to advance the cause of kindergartens and aid the growth of public sentiment in favor of kindergartens in our public schools." One of the first efforts of the association was the organization of a class of students for preliminary work in Kindergarten Normal training, supervised and conducted by Mrs. Clarence D. Bourke, then director of the kindergarten department of Grandville Avenue public school. Thirteen young women enrolled for this study of Froebel methods. In the Spring of 1891 a number of public meetings were held, assisted by the young women of the training class. In June, 1891, the association called to the city Mrs. Lucretia Willard Treat, of Chicago. A kindergarten of fifty children was organized and conducted during July and August, and Mrs. Treat also conducted classes for teachers. Such was the beginning of the Grand Rapids Kindergarten Association, which has become an institution with a national reputation. Mrs. Treat, who was its moving spirit for many years, died Feb. 16, 1904, but her work has been successfully carried on until the present time by Miss Clara Wheeler. The Kindergarten grew rapidly in public favor and now constitutes an important part of Grand Rapids' public school system.

## PUBLIC LIBRARY

This institution, now a valuable adjunct not only to the public schools but the citizens of Grand Rapids in general, was the outgrowth of the Grand Rapids Lyceum Association and was started in 1843. The nucleus was a chest of books discovered in the attic of some school house and brought hither by a young lawyer. Some additions were made from time to time, chiefly by private gifts, until its catalogue showed two or three hundred volumes, mostly small, and miscellaneous in character. About 1850, by a formal vote, the association turned them over to the Mechanics' Mutual Protection lodge, and this organization added to the library somewhat, both by purchase and from contributions. When this society dissolved, in 1859, the library, with its other property, was distributed among the individual members. In the early part of 1858, a movement looking toward the establishment of a public library was set on foot. On Feb. 24, the first meeting of the association—or rather a meeting



called for the purpose of organizing the association—was held in Luce's Hall, Rev. Dr. F. H. Cuming presiding. At another meeting on May 5 the association was formed, a constitution adopted, and the following officers were elected: William J. Welles, president; Henry Martin, first vice-president; Eben Smith, Jr., second vice-president; John King Dunn, corresponding secretary; Thomas C. Boughton, recording secretary; Norris T. Butler, treasurer; S. B. McCray, William Hovey, F. B. Gilbert, P. J. G. Hodenpyl, Charles H. Taylor, George H. Hess and Harvey Gaylord, managers. The association was an incorporated stock company and began work with ninety-six members and fifty-one stockholders, a library of 771 volumes of selected works, and \$769.14 in the treasury. The association continued in existence, with something of a hard struggle, for about three years. In October, 1861, through the decline of the proceeds of the lecture platform and some other causes, the association got in debt and was obliged to mortgage its library and fixtures for the security of a debt of \$250. The membership fees were not sufficient to meet the running expenses and the members became discouraged. In December, 1861, the proposition was made to transfer the books of the library to the Board of Education of District No. 1, and they were removed to the Central School building and consolidated with the Public School Library. A small library of less than one hundred volumes had been collected by the district at an early date and was kept in the garret of the old stone schoolhouse. This library had received several considerable additions, among others the property of an organization known as the City Library, and with this acquisition numbered some 2,000 volumes. A room in the tower of the Central school house was occupied by the consolidated library, and owing to this location the circulation of the books was not general among citizens.

A Ladies' Reading Club (the germ of the Ladies' Literary Club) was organized during the winter of 1869-70, under the inspiration of a series of historical lectures delivered by Mrs. L. H. Stone, of Kalamazoo, and this club felt the need of books. Mrs. L. D. Putnam, Mrs. S. L. Withey, Mrs. S. L. Fuller, Mrs. A. J. Daniels, Mrs. O. A. Ball, Mrs. H. J. Hollister, and many other prominent ladies set about the work of raising funds, and in a comparatively short time \$1,200 was obtained. With this sum a room was fitted up and Miss Frances E. Holcomb was placed in charge of the library of 1,000 volumes. The first year this City Library Association, as it was called, had 300 members, and it continued to prosper until its library contained 1,200 volumes of history, biography, travels, miscellany and fiction. After an experience of a year and a half the ladies came to the conclusion that the interests of all concerned would be better served by uniting their library with the school library and a small library of fifty books belonging to the Y. M. C. A. A consolidation was effected and the library was opened, Dec. 21, 1871, in rooms on the second floor, north side of Monroe avenue, near Pearl street. Miss Frances E. Holcomb, the librarian of the ladies' library, was continued in office under the new regime. This union brought together 4,045 volumes, derived from the following sources: Library of School District No. 1, 2,564 volumes; the West Side School Library (formerly kept in the Union School building and open to the public), 200 volumes; the Ladies'



Library Association, 1,231 volumes, and the Y. M. C. A. library, fifty volumes. Each year the number of books added to the library increased, until measures for their removal to more commodious quarters became necessary. This was effected in 1875, when the library was reopened to the public with enlarged facilities in the second story of the Ledyard Block. Even these rooms became cramped by the expansion of the institution, and in October, 1888, the library was removed to a commodious location in the City Hall. In December, 1876, Miss Holcomb, having become Mrs. C. B. Bacon, retired from the office of librarian, and in January Mrs. Alfred Putnam was chosen to succeed her. Disagreements arose over this selection and resulted in the dissolution of the union between the Ladies' Library and the Public Library, in 1878. Upon retiring the ladies took with them the 1,200 books originally belonging to their association, and they eventually came into the possession of the Ladies' Literary Club.

After the separation the government of the library rested entirely in the hands of the Board of Education. Mrs. Putnam continued to serve as librarian until January, 1884, when she was succeeded by Mrs. Frances C. Wood, who worthily performed the increasingly arduous duties of that office until February, 1886, when she was relieved by H. J. Carr. This gentleman served as librarian from 1887 to 1890, inclusive, and was succeeded by Miss Lucy Ball, who served until 1901. The last named was succeeded by Miss Elizabeth Steinman, who officiated until Oct. 1, 1904, when Samuel H. Ranck, the present librarian, was installed. In 1901, Martin A. Ryerson, of Chicago, offered to erect a suitable library building if the city would provide the site. This generous offer was accepted and the Board of Education selected for the site the northeast corner of Library street and Bostwick avenue. On July 4, 1902, the cornerstone of the library building was laid with appropriate ceremonies, and in June, 1904, the moving out of the old home into the new took place. The dedication of the new building took place Oct. 5, 1904, the occasion being declared a municipal holiday. The library remained under the control of the Board of Education until Sept. 7, 1903, when it passed under the control of the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids. The first board of commissioners was composed of C. L. Harvey, J. A. S. Verdier, John Patton, Henry Beets, J. A. J. Friedrich. The library now contains about 180,000 volumes, several thousand of which are in the children's room, where the little ones have free access to them. Through the influence of the teachers many parents have been induced to take out cards for their children. There are at present twelve branch libraries in the public school buildings, besides one branch on the West Side which occupies a separate building, and the annual circulation from the Ryerson Library, the branch libraries, and the library stations, among the pupils of the public schools, is about 270,000 volumes.

#### PUBLIC MUSEUM.

This institution is also a part of the educational system of the City of Grand Rapids. It is located at the corner of Washington street and Jefferson avenue, in a building which was bought for that purpose, in 1903. Here are to be found thousands of exhibits of natural

history, archaeology, ethnology, Indian and historic relics, etc. The museum had its origin in 1855, when A. O. Currier and a few other educated gentlemen organized the "Grand Rapids Lyceum of Natural History." Prof. Franklin Everett, one of the organizers, had a cabinet of minerals, geological specimens, and fossils, which he used in his academy, and Mr. Currier and Dr. William H. DeCamp also had fine collections. But in the early sixties the society was allowed to languish and die. In 1865, George Wickwire Smith, a lad whose genius outran his years, gathered about him a number of youths in the Union School and organized a club which he named the "Kent Institute." In 1867 he proposed to those who had been members of the "Lyceum of Natural History" that the two societies be combined. This he accomplished, the articles of association bearing date of Jan. 2, 1868, and the name suggested by him was adopted—"Kent Scientific Institute." Those who had formerly contributed by loans to the older society presented the exhibits to the new one, and these collections were the basis of the present museum. After the new Central High School (now the Junior High) building was completed, the treasures of the Kent Scientific Institute were stored in various rooms and adjoining buildings and the collections were used to aid the teaching of natural history in the schools. In 1901, the Board of Education obtained complete control of the property and the museum was put in shape in the auditorium of the Central High School. On Jan. 7, 1904, the museum in its present location was formally opened to the public, and since then there have been many collections of value added. It has become an important factor in the civic life of Grand Rapids, and the collections are potent influences in educational work.

#### SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF.

The year 1899 witnessed the first movement toward the introduction into Grand Rapids of the oral method of instructing the deaf. In September of that year a school was established at the corner of Michigan street and Division avenue. Miss Margaret Sullivan was installed as principal and Miss Anna Condon as assistant, and the school opened with sixteen pupils. Since that time the school has been a part of the public school system. In the instruction of these unfortunates the oral method is used entirely, the manual alphabet being discarded.

#### GRAND RAPIDS ACADEMY.

This institution, long since dead, grew out of the school founded by Henry Seymour, in 1842, and carried on "in the house occupied for worship by the Dutch Reformed," at or near the corner of Fountain street and Ottawa avenue. It next occupied a small building on Prospect Hill, in 1843, and in 1844 it occupied the court house building on Court House Square, with an adjoining cottage near the southeast corner of the square, in which the female department was housed. By act of the Legislature, approved March 11, 1844, the school was incorporated as the Grand Rapids Academy. Section 1 of the act of incorporation named the persons filing the articles of association, among whom were a number of the prominent citizens of the then



village; Section 2 provided that the academy shall be located "at or near the village of Grand Rapids," to afford instruction in the various branches of literature; Section 3 regulated the number of trustees and the manner of their election; Section 4 divided the Board into three classes; Section 5 governed the disposition of the funds; Section 6 provided that any three of the trustees could call a meeting of the Board; and Section 7 prescribed that the Legislature should have the power at any time of amending or repealing the act.

The academy was not the success that the projectors had hoped for. In October, 1844, E. B. Elliott, a graduate of Hamilton College, New York, became principal. He was succeeded in June, 1845, by Addison Ballard, who was aided the following winter by C. P. Hodges, in the capacity of assistant. In October, 1846, Franklin Everett, A. M., became principal; Mrs. Everett had charge of the female department as preceptress, and Miss Elizabeth White and Thomas B. Cuming were the assistants. After the building of the stone school house, and the organization of union schools in the district, the academy, like Othello, began to find its occupation gone, and April 16, 1851, Prof. Everett announced that the Grand Rapids Academy would close on the second of the following May. This ended the work of the academy as a corporate institution, but Prof. Everett and his wife maintained in their residence a private academy upward of twenty years longer.

### COUNTRY SCHOOLS.

The history of the rural schools of Kent County during the pioneer period is veiled somewhat in obscurity. It is known that Mrs. Jerry Boynton, a native of New York, came with her husband and settled on a farm in Byron township, in 1836, and that she taught school there in the early years of her residence. It is also known that Converse Close, who was born in Saratoga County, New York, in 1822, and received a good education in his native State, came to Michigan in 1843; that he settled in the township of Grattan, where he taught for a number of years, and for several terms was a member of the Board of Supervisors. In every neighborhood, as soon as a sufficient number of settlers located therein, a school was established, but anything like a complete history of these early institutions of learning seems to be unattainable.

The constitution of 1835, under which Michigan was admitted as a State, provided for a superintendent of public instruction. In 1837 that official made his first report, in which he gave a statistical abstract concerning the schools in each county, but Kent does not appear in this abstract, for the very good reason that no districts had as yet been established in the county. In 1840, however, in Kent County, fifteen districts reported, and from seven no report was received, hence it seems that at about that time there were twenty-two school districts in the county. The school population was 549, and the length of the school term was a little more than four months.

In 1860 the State superintendent included in his report a detailed statement of the school population, to-wit: Township of Ada, 363; Algoma, 309; Alpine, 574; Bowne, 259; Byron, 341; Caledonia, 281; Cannon, 434; Cascade, 330; Courtland, 306; Gaines, 330; Grand Rapids (township), 334; Grand Rapids (city), 2,362; Grattan, 342; Low-



ell, 370; Nelson, 148; Oakfield, 459; Paris, 427; Plainfield, 419; Solon, 106; Sparta, 258; Tyrone, 73; Vergennes, 546; Walker, 471; Wyoming, 440; total, 10,281. The apportionment of the public money, including the two-mill tax, was distributed as follows: Ada, \$423.48; Algoma, \$396.88; Alpine, \$873.77; Bowne, \$300.92; Byron, \$342.62; Caledonia, \$160.15; Cannon, \$551.20; Cascade, \$546.76; Courtland, \$340.71; Gaines, \$342.17; Grand Rapids (township), \$636.65; Grand Rapids (city), \$6,640.27; Grattan, \$410.01; Lowell, \$679.38; Nelson, \$137.96; Oakfield, \$586.76; Paris, \$641.73; Plainfield, \$653.83; Solon, \$90.91; Sparta, \$304.58; Tyrone, \$178; Vergennes, \$565.13; Walker, \$719.20; Wyoming, \$575.31.

In the original plan of common school education in Michigan, each township had three school inspectors, whose duty it was to organize districts, apportion the school moneys to the districts, examine applicants for appointment as teachers, grant certificates and visit schools. With some changes in the mode of visitation, the provisions of the original enactment remained unchanged until 1867, when a law was passed creating the office of county superintendent, the first incumbent of which was to be elected in April of that year and to assume the duties of the office on May 1, 1867. In Kent county Chester C. Bicknell was elected superintendent. In 1868, Mr. Bicknell reported that of the teachers employed 96 were men, receiving an average monthly salary of \$58.92, and 237 were women, whose average monthly salary was \$25.45. The superintendent complained of the condition of the school houses and the general lack of school facilities.

In the past half century the rural schools of Kent county have kept pace with the march of progress. The old log school house and the twenty-five dollar teacher have passed away. In their places have come the modern school building and the teacher with progressive ideas. According to the latest official reports to the county commissioner of schools, there were in 1918 in Kent county outside the city of Grand Rapids, 205 schools, employing 334 teachers, of whom 42 were men, receiving an average monthly salary of \$78.27, and 292 women, whose average salary was \$49.47. In the report of the State superintendent of public instruction for the year 1915, which is the latest report at hand, there were nine village high schools in Kent county. Caledonia employed one teacher and enrolled 29 pupils; Cedar Springs and East Grand Rapids made no report as to high school; Grandville employed three teachers and enrolled 66 pupils; Kent City employed two teachers and enrolled 73 pupils; Lowell employed five teachers and enrolled 156 pupils; Rockford employed four teachers and enrolled 90 pupils; and Sand Lake and Sparta made no report. There were twenty graded school districts, located as follows: Ada, 90 pupils; Caledonia, 96 pupils; Caledonia township, No. 3, 53 pupils; Cannon township, No. 3 fractional, 66 pupils; Cedar Springs, 261 pupils; East Grand Rapids, 199 pupils; Grand Rapids township, No. 8 fractional, 97 pupils; Grand Rapids township, No. 6, 126 pupils; Grandville, 301 pupils; Grattan, 81 pupils; Kent City, 139 pupils; Lowell, 489 pupils; Paris township, No. 1, 127 pupils; Plainfield township, No. 9 fractional, 188 pupils; Rockford, 237 pupils; Sand Lake, 112 pupils; Sparta, 397 pupils; Walker township, No. 11, 153 pupils; Wyoming township, No. 7, 501 pupils; Wyoming town-



ship, No. 9 fractional, 580 pupils. The term in these schools was nine months. The school population outside the city of Grand Rapids was 13,378, and the enrollment was 4,059. The State school fund apportioned to the county (including the city of Grand Rapids) amounted to \$310,454.60.

Mr. Bicknell served as county superintendent of schools until May 1, 1869, when he was succeeded by Henry B. Fallass. The latter served a period of four years, being succeeded, in 1873, by George A. Renney, who was elected for a two-year term. In 1875 the legislature repealed the county superintendency law and substituted a system of township superintendence, differing only a little from the former plan of township inspectors. A new law, enacted in 1881, combined county examinations with township supervision, but this plan proving unsatisfactory, in 1887 the law was revised and amended, the secretary of the county board of examiners exercising the duties of a supervising officer. In the year 1891 an act was passed providing for county commissioners of schools and two county examiners, and the following is a list of the county commissioners of schools in Kent county since the establishment of the office, with the year in which each was elected: A. H. Smith, 1891; G. T. Chapel, 1897; Arthur R. Zimmer, 1901; Allen M. Freeland, present incumbent, 1907.

#### PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In November, 1844, Miss Sarah P. Stevens opened a school for young ladies in upper rooms of the dwelling of C. P. Calkins, corner of Fountain street and Ottawa avenue. She continued it for a second term in rooms on Monroe street, "opposite the Rathbone Building." During this same winter H. H. Philbrick conducted, in the Dutch Reformed Church, a "Science of Music," or, as the unscientific minds termed it, "a singin' school." In the winters between 1847 and 1851, W. K. Wheeler kept a dancing school in the National Hotel, to which the young men and maidens resorted in goodly numbers in order to perfect themselves in that graceful accomplishment. Mrs. A. F. Jennison, in 1848 and 1849, kept a select school for young ladies on Prospect Hill. A prosperous school of the early period was kept for some years by Mrs. Streeter, in a building on Barclay street, south of Fountain. This was for both sexes and was well attended. For some time prior to 1846, a Miss Jones kept a young ladies' school on Monroe street, near Ottawa. In the fall of 1848, Mrs. E. T. Moore had a "school for young ladies and misses" at her residence on the south side of Monroe avenue, above Market. In 1853 Mrs. Moore kept a children's school on Lagrave street. On Aug. 1, 1854, Miss H. S. DePew opened a "cottage school" in a building opposite John Ball's residence on East Fulton street. This was a small but vigorous school and had an existence of some three years.

In December, 1856, a "School for Painting" was kept in Collin's Hall, at the corner of old Canal and Erie streets. It was short lived. From 1855 to 1857, inclusive, the Rev. O. H. Staples conducted a select school for young ladies. In the beginning it was kept in rather cramped quarters. The school opened, March 2, 1857, in commodious quarters, at the corner of Bostwick avenue and Lyon streets. Mr. Staples was assisted during the first two years of his school by Miss Laura Prentiss, and during the latter year by Mrs. Mary E.



Bryan. The course of study embraced the branches usual in high schools. Miss Prentiss, after her retirement from Mr. Staples' academy, with Mrs. D. Ives, of Detroit, opened "A New Select School for Young Ladies and Misses" in rooms over J. W. Peirce's store on old Canal street, in which instruction was given in the common English branches, together with vocal and instrumental music.

The "writing school," the forerunner of the commercial college, flourished almost from the beginning of the settlement, but not until the community had grown to considerable proportions came its more ambitious development. In June, 1851, William and Garret Barry opened a "Mercantile Academy" in McConnell's block, for the teaching of book-keeping, mathematics, penmanship, and the other commercial branches of learning. In 1852, Joseph J. Watson opened a small private school at the corner of Monroe and Ionia streets, for the teaching of architectural drawing and drafting, and this school was well patronized for some time by young mechanics. In the Spring of 1857, Prof. M. P. Clark conducted writing classes in the Union schools on the east and west sides, and a special class in "Ladies' Epistolary Writing." In the Fall of 1859 a course in book-keeping was added to the curriculum of the East Side Union school, and Prof. Charles J. Dietrich was chosen to teach that branch of study. In addition to his work in the public school, in 1860, he taught "Dietrich's Mercantile Institute" in Luce's Block, on Monroe avenue.

To Prof. C. G. Swensberg is due the credit of giving to the city its first permanent commercial college, founded Jan. 25, 1866. He infused into this school the sterling integrity and straightforward business methods which placed him in the front rank among the business men of the city, and these qualities soon gave the Grand Rapids Business College, now known as the Grand Rapids Business Institute, a place with the best institutions of its type in the West. The college offices and school room are in the Norris Building. The institution is now under the management of M. E. Davenport. For many years this college was without a rival in the city, but in time other similar institutions were established and grew into prosperous conditions. The McLachlan Business University was established in 1899, when the McLachlan brothers purchased the Columbia Business College, which was organized in 1892. Malcolm McLachlan and Arthur F. Howell are the proprietors. The school is situated at 110-118 Pearl street. The Churchill Business Institute is located at 9-11 Ionia avenue, and of this institution Loren R. Churchill is president, William L. Rice is secretary, and Mrs. B. A. Churchill is treasurer.

About 1883, the Rev. Isaac P. Powell established a private school at his residence on North College avenue and successfully carried it on for many years. He was especially gifted in teaching boys and inspiring them with noble ideals. He died, March 17, 1903. The school founded by him was continued at 132 Barclay street by Mrs. William H. Eastman until 1917, when she closed the institution's long and successful career.

In the years 1853 and 1854, Peter G. Koch, a theological student, kept a school for Catholic children at the corner of Monroe and Ionia streets. This "academy" was under the patronage of the church, but it was not until several years later that a regularly equipped parochial school—St. Andrew's Academy—was established. It was chiefly



through the efforts of the late Father P. J. McManus that this was accomplished, and a well appointed two-story brick school house was erected, in 1871-72, on the corner of Sheldon avenue and Maple street. In 1877 the school was organized under the present system and later an addition was made to the building for the use of the Catholic Central High School. In January, 1915, fire seriously damaged the building and a fine new structure has since been erected. The children are taught by the Dominican sisters.

On March 20, 1850, the State legislature passed an act incorporating an institution of learning in Grand Rapids, under the title of St. Mark's College. The female preparatory department was opened, June 3, 1850, in the vestry rooms of St. Mark's church, with Miss J. A. Hollister in charge. The male preparatory department, under D. D. Van Antwerp, was ready for the reception of pupils on Sept. 9 of the same year. The Rev. Mr. Taylor was president of the college, which seems to have come into existence before there was a demand for it, as it never developed far beyond the preparatory stage, and expired after a short life of three years. In St. Mark's Academy, however, established in September, 1887, as a parochial school, the old college had a vigorous successor and it was conducted uninterruptedly until 1899, when the school was discontinued.

The Theological School and Calvin College, an institution of the Christian Reformed Church, originated in the meeting of the Classis of that denomination, held at Grand Rapids, Feb. 6, 1861. On July 22, 1863, the Rev. W. H. Van Leeuwen took it upon himself to give instruction in preparatory branches, and the following year Rev. D. J. Van der Werp was appointed as teacher. In 1868 the first student was examined and admitted to the ministry and he was followed by others in the succeeding years. In 1876 the Holland Christian Reformed Seminary was established, and in 1888 the theological course was extended to three years. In 1890, a plat containing one acre was purchased at the corner of Madison avenue and Fifth street, and in 1892 a school building was erected, being occupied in September of the same year. From the beginning of the school certain literary branches (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Dutch, English, History, Philosophy, etc.) were taught as a preparation for the study of theology, and this preparatory literary course grew into the present Calvin College. From time to time, beginning in 1900, various collegiate courses were added to the curriculum, so that at present four years of college work are offered. In 1910 a campus of ten acres was presented to the institution by the citizens of Grand Rapids, and in 1915 plans were started for the erection of a building thereon. Actual building operations were started on March 15, 1916, and the structure was finished and occupied with formal exercises, Sept. 4, 1917.

Lack of space forbids detailed mention of all private and parochial schools in the county, but the foregoing are the principal ones. According to the report of the State Superintendent of Education, in 1915, there were 4 private and 31 parochial schools in Kent county, employing 198 teachers and enrolling 7,720 pupils. In addition to these were the usual complement of commercial and business colleges. With these private institutions and the magnificent public school system, the citizens of the "Valley City" and Kent county are not lacking in educational facilities.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

THE FIRST PHYSICIAN—SKETCHES OF MANY PRACTITIONERS—WOMEN PHYSICIANS—MEDICAL SOCIETIES—HOMEOPATHY—CITY HEALTH CONDITIONS.

Just who was the first physician to ply his vocation in Grand Rapids is not certain. Among the early settlers at Gull Prairie was a gentleman known as Dr. Jason Winslow, who at least had some knowledge of medicine and surgery. On Jan. 1, 1835, he was called by Richard Godfroy to reduce a dislocated hip on the person of Joel Guild. Grand Rapids was then a village of less than one hundred persons, and there was no physician nearer than Gull Prairie, in Kalamazoo County.

In the early days of settlement simple diseases were treated with teas and decoctions, prepared by some woman whose training and experience had rendered her skillful in such matters. But there came times when the homely remedies failed and professional skill had to be sought. The first physician to settle permanently within the limits of the present city was Dr. Stephen A. Wilson, who arrived in August, 1835. In the Spring of 1837 he formed a partnership with Dr. Charles Shepard, the association lasting until 1839, in the Fall of which year Dr. Wilson died. Dr. Charles Shepard was the second resident physician. He arrived Oct. 20, 1835, only two months after Dr. Wilson came. The third was Dr. Gravelle, a young French physician, who came in the Spring of 1836, but remained only until the Fall of that year. Dr. Jason Winslow, the physician who rendered the first professional service in the community, was the fourth to settle here. He came from Gull Prairie in the Spring of 1837. He was of New England stock and had practiced in Stockholm, St. Lawrence County, New York, before coming to Michigan. After a residence of six years in Grand Rapids he died March 15, 1843. Dr. F. J. Higginson was the fifth. He came in 1839. He also was a New England man, a graduate of the Medical Department of Harvard College, and had practiced at Cambridge, Mass. He remained in Grand Rapids only about two years and then removed in 1841 to Brattleboro, Vt., where he practiced many years and died in that place. A few of the other pioneer physicians of this community, with date of arrival, are here named in the order of their coming: Alonzo Platt, in 1842; Philander H. Bowman, in 1846; Charles L. Henderson, in 1847; Wenzel Blumrich, in September, 1848; Alfred Garlock, in 1849; C. J. Fearing, in 1851; Oscar H. Chipman, Feb. 28, 1852; Sterling W. Allen, in 1852, and D. W. Bliss, in 1854.

Alonzo Platt, M. D., for years one of the leading physicians of the city, was born Jan. 10, 1806, in Stephentown, Rensselaer County, New York, being a son of Judge Henry Platt of that place. After preparatory studies at Lenox, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, he was compelled, on account of trouble with his eyes, to give up his



cherished hope of taking a four years' collegiate course in Arts; but in 1825, his eyesight becoming strong again, he commenced the study of medicine with Dr. Wright, of New Lebanon, N. Y., also receiving instruction, later on, at the hands of Dr. John De Lamar, of Sheffield, Mass. He was graduated in medicine, after full courses of lectures, by the Berkshire Medical College (Mass.) in December, 1829, and practiced for two years at Port Gibson, Ontario County, New York, removing in the Spring of 1832 to Ann Arbor, Mich. After practicing his profession in Ann Arbor for ten years he came to Grand Rapids, in 1842. During the Civil War Dr. Platt was surgeon of the Enrolling Board for this Congressional district, and was prominently connected for years with the Grand Rapids Medical and Surgical Society, also with the State society. He took an active part in establishing St. Mark's Home and Hospital, and was for several years physician in charge of that institution. He was very charitable, and at one time kept a free dispensary at his residence. For several years prior to his demise he had been in failing health, being obliged to relinquish his practice to a great extent, and finally succumbed to the encroachments of disease, Nov. 18, 1882, after having practiced medicine in this city for forty years. A daughter of Dr. Platt became the wife of Don M. Dickinson, who served as a member of the cabinet of President Cleveland.

Charles L. Henderson, M. D., was born at Troy, N. Y., June 14, 1817. From there the family removed to Cleveland, Ohio, and he acquired a good education in the schools of that city, after which he entered the Medical Department of the Western Reserve College, and was graduated in that institution March 4, 1846. He then spent a year or more at Sault Ste. Marie, and came to Grand Rapids in November, 1847. In 1850 he went to California, where he stayed but about a year, and then returned and made Grand Rapids his home during the remainder of his life. On Aug. 26, 1861, he entered the army as surgeon of the Second Michigan cavalry. Ardent, impulsive and sanguine in temperament, this undertaking proved too much for his physical powers, and in October, 1862, he resigned on account of ill health. His ailment became chronic, so that he was never after equal to the duties of a steady practice in his profession, and at length it resulted in hemiplegic paralysis, by which he was prostrated and confined to his home during the last three years of his life. He died Jan. 16, 1884.

Wenzel Blumrich was born in Friedland, Bohemia, May 26, 1812, and graduated in medicine at the Charles Ferdinand University, Prague, Bohemia, July 31, 1839. He received three Latin diplomas, one each for medicine, surgery and obstetrics. He practiced in Kratzau, Bohemia, during nine years subsequent to his graduation, and then removed to the United States, settling in Grand Rapids Sept. 26, 1848. He died in Grand Rapids Dec. 20, 1862.

Alfred Garlock, M. D., was born at Newark, N. Y., Dec. 18, 1824. He studied medicine at Palmyra, and graduated for his profession at Buffalo, in the Spring of 1849. In the same year he came to Grand Rapids and opened an office in the Irving Hall building, and very soon found himself busy in an extensive practice. From there a few years later he removed his office to the north side of Monroe ave-



nue, and then about 1860, or soon thereafter, to Luce's Block, where it remained until his death; his residence being situated on the east side of Barclay street, a little north of Fulton, the place now being occupied as a parsonage by the First Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. Garlock died there of pneumonia, Feb. 17, 1884.

Oscar H. Chipman was born in Madrid, St. Lawrence County, New York, Nov. 16, 1807. In early manhood he attended the St. Lawrence Academy. He began the study of medicine under the tutelage of Dr. John H. McChesny, a prominent physician at that time, of Potsdam, and graduated in the Spring of 1833 at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Western New York, then in the town of Fairfield, Herkimer County. In June, 1833, he removed to Michigan and settled in Oakland County, where he practiced until 1852, at which time he came to Grand Rapids. Here he continued in the active practice of his profession until a few years before his death, and in 1897, he removed to Kalamazoo, where he died at an advanced age.

Sterling W. Allen was born in Springfield, Otsego County, New York, July 27, 1801. He commenced the study of medicine at Rochester, N. Y., in 1822, graduating in 1825. After practicing twenty-seven years in Clarkson and Brockport, N. Y., and at Pontiac, Mich., he came to Grand Rapids in 1852. He practiced in this city until his death, which occurred May 16, 1883.

Doctor W. Bliss, M. D., was born in the town of Brutus, Cayuga County, New York, Aug. 18, 1825. In his youth the family moved to Ohio, where he afterward entered the Medical Department of the Western Reserve College and graduated therefrom in the early part of 1845. He began practice in his profession at Chagrin Falls, Ohio; thence removed to Cleveland, and in 1851 to Ionia, Mich. From the latter place, in 1854, he came to Grand Rapids, where he quickly took position in the front rank in his profession and in the popular regard, and had an excellent and extensive practice until the breaking out of the Civil War. On May 13, 1861, he was commissioned surgeon of the Third Michigan infantry, went with that gallant body of troops to the front, and in September of the same year was promoted to major and surgeon of United States volunteers, the chief field of his labors being in hospitals at and near Washington. On March 13, 1865, he was breveted colonel United States volunteers, "for faithful and meritorious service," and was mustered out with honor Dec. 8, 1865. After the war he remained settled in Washington and practiced there until his death, some twenty-three years later, much of the time also holding a position in the Board of Health of the District of Columbia. When President Garfield was stricken down, Dr. Bliss was called by Secretary of War Robert T. Lincoln, and was the attending physician at the bedside at Washington and at Elberon until that soldier-statesman breathed his last. Dr. Bliss died in Washington, D. C., Feb. 21, 1889.

Dr. Bowman was a classmate of Dr. O. H. Chipman, and had practiced in Canada. He practiced here for nine years, dying in 1859. Dr. Fearing was a Rhode Island man and lived here only two years.

Another early Grand Rapids physician of note was Dr. John H. Hollister, who came to the city in June, 1849. He was born on a farm in Livingston County, New York, Aug. 6, 1824. He graduated at the



Berkshire Medical College, Pittsfield, Mass., in 1848, and immediately removed to the West for the practice of medicine in Montcalm County, Michigan. He remained there only one year, moving to Grand Rapids in June, 1849. He practiced in Grand Rapids six years, gaining a large business, and being an influential factor in local political circles. He went from Grand Rapids to Chicago in April, 1855, and afterward resided there. With others, he was a prime factor in the incorporation of the Chicago Medical College, and was afterward connected with that institution, chiefly as professor of the Principles of Medicine and Pathology. He was a member of the Chicago Medical Society, Illinois State Medical Society, American Medical Association, and the International Medical Congress. He was appointed, during 1889, supervising editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association. He was treasurer of the Illinois State Medical Society for more than twenty years.

Dr. Lyman A. Brewer, a graduate of the Western Reserve College, Medical Department, became a resident of Grand Rapids in 1854 and a year later formed a partnership with Dr. DeCamp, which lasted until 1857. He was born in Ontario County, New York, in 1817. After his graduation at Cleveland he took a post-graduate course at Ann Arbor, and soon thereafter settled in Jonesville, Mich., where he practiced until 1854, at which time he came to Grand Rapids. In 1858 he returned to Cleveland, and when the Civil War broke out served in the army four years. After the war he was connected professionally with an Indian commission in the Rocky Mountain region, remaining in that country from 1865 to 1870, when he returned to Hillsdale County, but practiced only six years longer, his death occurring in 1876.

William H. DeCamp was born in Mt. Morris, Livingston County, New York, Nov. 6, 1825. He studied medicine with Dr. Lewis G. Ferris, of Mt. Morris, and Dr. C. C. Chaffee, of Nunda, N. Y.; took one course of lectures in the Medical Department of the New York University, and two in the medical college at Geneva, N. Y., graduating at the latter institution, in February, 1847, and entered into practice at Grove Center, Allegheny County, New York, remaining four years, after which he practiced for the same number of years at Hunt's Hollow, Livingston County. His health failing, he decided to come west and establish himself in the drug business, and accordingly opened a drug store in Grand Rapids in May, 1855, continuing the business until burned out, in 1857. Reduced by this misfortune to a low financial status, he recommenced the practice of medicine, in which he was engaged the remainder of his active life. The Doctor took an active part in the Civil War, being appointed surgeon of the First Michigan Engineers and Mechanics by Austin Blair, the "war Governor" of Michigan, Sept. 12, 1861, and serving three years as such, until discharged by expiration of time of enlistment, at Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 26, 1864. He was assigned to the position of Post Medical Director at Harrodsburg, Ky., from Oct. 20, 1862, to Jan. 24, 1863, where 1,500 Confederate wounded had been stationed by General Bragg in his retreat from Kentucky, after the battle of Perryville. Dr. DeCamp was elected president of the Michigan State Medical Society in 1868, and also president of the Grand Rapids Medical and Surgical Society for 1872-73. He died July 4, 1898.



Drs. J. F. Grove and G. K. Johnson were the physicians who settled in Grand Rapids in 1856. The first named was a graduate of the Rush Medical College at Chicago. He settled in Grand Rapids in July, 1856, and here he practiced until the time of his death, except for the interval while he was in the army service during the Civil War. He entered service as assistant surgeon of the Third Michigan infantry, Aug. 15, 1862, was commissioned surgeon of that regiment Sept. 11, 1862, and was mustered out June 20, 1864. He died in Grand Rapids, of congestion of the brain, July 7, 1885.

George K. Johnson, M. D., was born in Cayuga County, N. Y., Jan. 17, 1822. He moved to Michigan with his father in 1836, when 14 years of age, and settled on a new farm in the township of Brighton, Livingston County. There and in that vicinity he spent three or four years, helping his father to make a farm and a home. He attended the McNiel Academy at Ann Arbor, two or three years, every month walking to and from his home. During that time, as well as while pursuing professional studies afterward, he eked out his scanty means by teaching school when the exigency demanded. At the age of twenty-one he entered the office of Dr. Ira Bingham, at Brighton, and began the study of medicine. In March, 1846, he received his degree in medicine from the Cleveland Medical College. In June following he established himself in Pontiac, this State, and began his professional work. In 1852 or 1853 he removed to Detroit and undertook light practice; but his health would not permit. In 1856, being unable to do the work of his profession, he came to this city in charge of the interests of the Detroit & Milwaukee railroad, then in course of construction, and in which some of his friends were largely interested. In 1857 he spent several months in England, partly in pursuit of health and partly in the interest of the road referred to above. In the Spring of 1859 he was elected mayor of Grand Rapids and served one term. In the Autumn of 1860, having regained sufficient health, he resumed his profession. In 1861 the great Civil War drew him into its vortex. He became surgeon of the First Michigan cavalry and went with that regiment to the field. He served with it during the exciting campaign of General Banks in the valley of the Shenandoah, in the early months of 1862. Later in the same season he served as medical director of a brigade of cavalry, commanded by Gen. John Buford, in the very stirring but unfortunate campaign of General Pope. He was at Second Bull Run, and had the grief to see his friend, Colonel Broadhead, the commander of the First Cavalry, yield up his life. In February, 1863, Congress created a corps of medical inspectors of the army, with increased rank. It consisted of eight inspectors, four of whom were to be taken from the regular service and four from the volunteer service. Dr. Johnson was commissioned as one of the four from the volunteer service, and was at once assigned to duty with the Army of the Potomac. He was in this service during the campaign of 1863. He was present at the battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, as well as some minor affairs. From the end of 1863 to the first of October, 1865, he was medical inspector of the Middle Military Department. In November, 1865, after a military service of four years and four months, he returned to his home in this city and at once resumed his practice, which he con-



tinued until his death, Sept. 3, 1908. Dr. Johnson was appointed pension examining surgeon for Grand Rapids shortly after the close of the war, and was the only surgeon on that service in this city for several years, until the Grand Rapids board was organized, after which he served as president of the board a number of years.

A prominent physician—Samuel R. Wooster—settled in Grand Rapids in 1857. He was a native of Connecticut, where he began the study of medicine, and graduated as a physician at the Yale Medical College, in New Haven. After locating in Grand Rapids he built up a good practice, due in a great measure to his genial disposition as well as to his exceptional professional ability. He practiced here until the breaking out of the Civil War, in 1861, when he entered the United States service as assistant surgeon of the Eighth Michigan infantry. He remained with that regiment until February, 1863, when he was commissioned surgeon of the First Michigan cavalry, remaining with this regiment until October, 1864, but was acting brigade surgeon most of the time and on duty at General Custer's headquarters. He was mustered out of the service in the Fall of 1864, and appointed acting staff surgeon, his commission being signed by Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of war. During this period he was engaged in field and hospital practice. After his discharge from the service in June, 1865, he settled at Muskegon, Mich., in July, and there he practiced until 1871, when he returned to Grand Rapids and resided here until his death, Feb. 6, 1906. He was examining surgeon for pensions in Muskegon from 1865 to 1871; member of the Board of Examining Surgeons for Pensions in Grand Rapids, from 1871 to 1887, and president of the Board from 1877 to 1887; county physician of Kent County from 1872 to 1889; city physician and health officer of Grand Rapids in 1880.

Dr. Henry G. Saunders became a resident of Grand Rapids in 1858, coming from the State of New York. He was an excellent physician and had no time for anything except his professional work. He continued the practice of medicine in Grand Rapids until his death, which occurred Dec. 22, 1899.

One new physician was added to the population, in 1860, in the person of Dr. John Brady. He was born Aug. 18, 1837, in Ireland, and came to the United States in 1855, settling at Seneca Falls, N. Y. He obtained classical instruction in an academy at that place, and entered the medical department of Buffalo University, in the Fall of 1857, graduating there after three full courses of lectures, Feb. 19, 1860. He settled in Grand Rapids shortly after his graduation and practiced until October, 1862, when he entered the Union Army as assistant surgeon, serving in Jackson, Mich., and Memphis, Tenn., six months, in the military hospitals. In May, 1863, he was ordered to leave the hospital and join the Forty-fifth Illinois infantry in the field, at Milliken's Bend, La. He participated afterward with the regiment in the battles of Raymond, Jackson, and Champion's Hill, and the assaults upon Vicksburg. He resigned from the army and re-entered civil practice at Grand Rapids, in 1866, becoming a charter member of the Michigan State Medical Society the same year. In 1883-84 he spent a year abroad as attending physician to the late John Clancy, a good share of which time was occupied in the study



of medicine in Paris. He served three terms as coroner of Kent County, was a member of the International Medical Congress, and was consulting surgeon to St. Mark's and the U. B. A. Hospitals. He died May 20, 1914.

The year 1862 witnessed the advent of Dr. Linus De Puy, who was born near the city of Rochester, N. Y., April 28, 1820. Shortly after he came of age he began the study of medicine at Albion, Mich. He attended lectures two winters at the medical department of the Western Reserve College, at that time in Willoughby, Ohio. In 1860 he went to Ann Arbor, Mich., and graduated there in the medical department of the University of Michigan in the Spring of 1862. He settled at Grand Rapids in the same year and practiced continuously eleven years. He then retired from the practice and removed to Chicago, where he engaged in the manufacture and sale of medicinal extracts. His health failing, he returned to Grand Rapids, in 1877, but he did not practice much. He was city physician during 1879. His death, from cancer of the stomach, occurred in this city Jan. 10, 1880, in the sixtieth year of his age.

By 1863, the population of Grand Rapids was about 10,000, and in that year two physicians were added to the list already in the field. They were Jacob Bentum and Gaylord B. Miller. Dr. Bentum was born Aug. 12, 1830, at Amsterdam, Holland; was graduated at the University of Leyden in 1853; practiced at Amsterdam six years, being connected with an Amsterdam hospital four years, and came to America in 1862—first to Muscatine, Iowa, then to Grand Rapids, Sept. 11, 1863. He died in this city, after practicing medicine twenty-five years, July 28, 1888, of typhoid fever.

Dr. G. B. Miller was born in Torrington, Litchfield County, Connecticut, July 25, 1831; graduated at the Berkshire Medical College, Pittsfield, Mass., in 1852, and practiced in Litchfield County, Connecticut, from 1852 to 1863, at which time he removed to Grand Rapids, where he resided until his death, May 25, 1902. The Doctor was appointed acting assistant surgeon, U. S. A., in January, 1864, and served in that capacity until July of the same year, stationed at Jackson, Mich., and Resaca, Ga.

Dr. William Wood, a graduate of the Grammar School at St. Thomas, Canada, and the medical department of the University of Michigan, located in Grand Rapids in 1864, and continued in the practice of his profession here until his death, which occurred Jan. 13, 1895.

Between 1860 and 1870 a number of physicians established themselves in Grand Rapids. Some of them left after a short stay, but others remained and several became prominent in medical circles. Dr. Ezra A. Hebard, a native of Massachusetts, came in the year 1866 and settled on a farm in Walker township, where he lived the remainder of his life, with the exception of two years' residence within the city. He served nine years as supervisor of Walker township and was a member of the Grand Rapids Board of United States Examining Surgeons.

Dr. David McWhorter became a resident of the city in 1866. He was a graduate of the Albany Medical College at Albany, N. Y. He retired from active practice shortly after coming to this city, but re-



tained his interest in medical matters. He was in active practice fifty years, from 1816 to 1866, thirty-three years of which were spent in New York State and seventeen years at Grass Lake, Mich. Dr. McWhorter was prominent as a public man, both in New York State and in Michigan, having represented his New York State district in Congress in 1847, and his district in the Michigan Legislature in 1853. He died Sept. 2, 1877.

Dr. Zenas E. Bliss was born at Eaton, Madison County, New York, July 4, 1832. He passed his childhood at Chagrin Falls, Ohio, removing, in 1851, to Ionia, Mich. He began the study of medicine at Chagrin Falls, in 1850, and at Ionia continued it in the office of his brother, Dr. D. W. Bliss. He graduated at the University of Michigan, taking the degree of Doctor of Medicine with the class of 1855, and practiced at Ionia until 1861, with the exception of four months in 1858-59 passed in the hospitals of Philadelphia and New York. He entered the army, 1861, as assistant surgeon of the Third Michigan infantry; participated in such capacity in the battles of Blackburn's Ford and First Bull Run, and served until Oct. 15, 1861, when he was commissioned surgeon. He was with the regiment through the Peninsular campaign, and on Feb. 27, 1863, received from President Lincoln a commission as surgeon of United States volunteers, his rank to date from Sept. 12, 1862. He was appointed by the Secretary of War Medical Purveyor of the United States army, Dec. 31, 1864, and was stationed in Baltimore, Md., where he was mustered out of service Feb. 2, 1866. He was brevetted lieutenant-colonel, May 22, 1866, for faithful service, to rank from Jan. 26, 1866. He spent the winter of 1866-67 in Europe, continuing his medical studies in the hospitals of London and Paris. He settled at Grand Rapids in the Spring of 1867 and practiced until 1874, when, his health failing, he was compelled to seek relief in travel abroad. He spent the winter of 1874-75 in Southern France, and returned in the summer of 1875, but his health continued poor and he withdrew from active participation in professional labor. He was commissioned a member of the Michigan State Board of Health for the term of six years, July 30, 1873, but served only one year on account of ill health. He served nearly eight years, from 1869 to 1877, on the Board of United States Examining Surgeons for Pensions at Grand Rapids, and at the time of his death was president of the Board. He died of consumption, April 23, 1877, and was buried at Grand Rapids.

Dr. Daniel A. Laubenstein, a native of Hungary, came to Grand Rapids in 1867. He was city physician in 1874, was elected coroner in 1880, and practiced his profession here until 1889, when he removed to Milwaukee.

Dr. Arthur Hazlewood settled in Grand Rapids in 1868. He was appointed a member of the State Board of Health in 1875 for two years; was reappointed in 1881 for the term of six years, and reappointed again in 1887 for another term of six years. He continued to practice his profession in Grand Rapids until about 1902, when he removed to Plainwell.

Among the prominent physicians and surgeons who located in the city after the Civil War was Dr. Frances A. Rutherford, the first woman practitioner to establish herself in Grand Rapids. She has



been in the continuous practice of her profession here since 1868, and now has the additional distinction of being the oldest physician, in point of continued practice in the Valley City.

James A. McPherson was born in Canada in 1849. He attended a course of medical lectures at the University of Michigan in 1869-70, then served a year and a half in the drug store of E. B. Escott at Grand Rapids, and graduated at the Detroit Medical College in the Spring of 1872. He soon settled at Grand Rapids, where a co-partnership was formed with the late James F. Grove, which lasted one year, after which time Dr. McPherson practiced alone. He died May 5, 1917.

Dr. Joseph Albright was born in the city of St. Catherines, Ont., Dec. 26, 1837. He graduated at the Toronto Normal School in 1865, and in 1868 began the study of medicine. He took one course of lectures at Bellevue Hospital Medical College and then entered the medical department of Trinity University, at Toronto, Canada. There he graduated in April, 1872, and settled for practice at Oxford, Lapeer County, Michigan, but remained there only one year, coming to Grand Rapids in June, 1873. Dr. Albright served a term as alderman in the Grand Rapids common council in 1883-84, representing the old Seventh ward. He died Nov. 7, 1915.

Dr. Joseph B. Griswold was born in Vermontville, Michigan, June 21, 1842. He entered the Agricultural College at Lansing in 1859, but remained only two years, enlisting as a member of the band attached to the Second Michigan cavalry, in 1861. He was discharged in 1862 on account of illness. He then commenced the study of medicine and attended courses of lectures during 1863-64, at the University of Michigan. In 1864 he re-entered the service as assistant surgeon of the Fourth Michigan infantry. He was commissioned regimental surgeon in January, 1866, and served in that capacity until honorably discharged in May, 1866. He was medical inspector during part of his service of the Department of San Antonio, Texas. He graduated at Rush Medical College, Chicago, in 1867. Dr. Griswold practiced medicine until 1873 at Taylor's Falls, Minn., at which time he became a resident of Grand Rapids. He was city physician for the years 1876-77, and was elected alderman of the old Fourth ward in 1880. He served a number of years as a member of the Grand Rapids Board of U. S. Examining Surgeons for Pensions, and at one time was president of the Board. He was also on the pension board in Minnesota, before coming to Grand Rapids. He died March 9, 1914.

Another physician who came to Grand Rapids after the Civil War, and who is still prominent in the medical circles of the city, is Dr. Eugene Boise. He was born in Wellington, Lorain County, Ohio, Nov. 29, 1846, and was educated in Oberlin College, graduating there in arts, with the class of 1867. Prior to entering college he was in the Civil War, serving as a private in the One Hundred and Fiftieth Ohio National Guard for four months, the time of enlistment. He took two courses of medicine in 1868-69, in the University of Michigan, graduating in 1869, and also taking a degree a year later at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Twenty-third street, New York City. He had the advantages of hospital experience in Charity Hospital, New York, in 1870-71, and the New York City Fever Hospital



in 1871. Nearly all of 1872 he spent in study abroad, principally in London and Vienna, and he settled in Grand Rapids, in September, 1872, and still continues the practice of his profession. He was one of the United States Examining Surgeons for Pensions from 1873 to 1885.

Dr. Charles H. Maxim was born in Palmyra, Me., Aug. 30, 1837, and graduated at Bowdoin College in March, 1868. After practicing in Dexter, Me., three years, he came to Grand Rapids in September, 1871. He was coroner of Kent County in 1878; member of the Board of Health in 1880-81, and city physician in 1884. He helped to establish the Grand Rapids Humane Society. He died of heart disease March 11, 1887.

Dr. James O. Edie was born June 14, 1837, at Hebron, Washington County, New York. He studied medicine at Oswego, N. Y., for a year or two, and then entered the medical department of the University of Michigan, taking the course of lectures for 1859-60, and afterward graduating with the class of 1864, at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa. He practiced in the Grand River Valley, with a brief interval, during his entire professional career. He came to Grand Rapids in 1875, intending to devote his time to lumbering interests, but soon drifted into the old medical lines and practiced here during the remainder of his career. He served two terms as county physician of Kent County. He died May 26, 1915, at Everett, Washington.

Dr. Joseph B. Hosken was born in Coburg, Ontario, Canada, Nov. 21, 1850. He studied medicine with Dr. Alonzo B. Palmer, of the Michigan State University, and graduated in the medical department of the University March 24, 1875. He practiced a year with Dr. W. H. DeCamp, of this city, and then went to New York, taking a course of lectures in the medical department of the University of New York, and spending six months in Bellevue and Charity Hospitals. He practiced six months in New York City, and returned to Grand Rapids in 1877. He died July 10, 1906.

Dr. George H. Wildberger was born April 6, 1840, in the city of Bamberg, Bavaria, and was graduated in medicine at the University of Wurzburg, May 24, 1865. He settled for practice, shortly after his graduation, at Kissingen, Bavaria; afterward entered practice at Bamberg, his native place, and in addition to his practice in the city was director of an orthopedic institution, which had been established by his father, who preceded him in the directorship. He was a surgeon in the German army during the Franco-German War, in 1870-71. He came to Grand Rapids, Oct. 7, 1875, and soon gained a large practice, principally among those of German descent. He had the misfortune to contract diphtheria from a patient, and died of paralysis of the heart, as a result of the systemic infection, Feb. 23, 1883.

Dr. Christopher J. Woolway was born in London, Canada; Oct. 28, 1854, and graduated at McGill University, Montreal, with the class of 1875. He settled at Grand Rapids in May, 1875, and remained in the city until June, 1879, when he was appointed surgeon of the Copper Falls copper mine, Keweenaw County, Michigan. He remained in the mines until Sept. 1, 1885, and then removed to St. Paul, Minn.

Among the physicians who located here in 1877 was William Ful-



ler, who is still actively engaged in the practice of his profession. Another was Dr. H. E. Locher, who was born in Freiburg, Baden, Germany, March 29, 1850. With his parents he came to America and settled in Norwalk, Ohio, a year and a half later. He studied medicine two years at Saranac, Mich. He took one course of lectures at the Detroit Medical College in 1875-76, and graduated at the Long Island College Hospital at Brooklyn, N. Y., in the Spring of 1877. He practiced in Ada, Kent County, until 1880, when he removed to Grand Rapids. He was elected a member of the Board of Education in 1888, and was also elected one of the Kent County coroners in November of the same year, and was again elected in 1892 and 1894. With his sister he was engaged in the drug business on Ellsworth avenue. Dr. Locher died Feb. 9, 1913.

Dr. Austin J. Pressey was born on a farm in Cayuga County, New York, Sept. 9, 1845. After receiving a common school education he took an academic course at Moravia, Cayuga County. He graduated at the Cincinnati College of Medicine and Surgery in June, 1876. He practiced at Bowne Center, Kent County, from 1877 until 1881, and at Freeport, Barry County, from 1881 until 1886, when he came to Grand Rapids. He practiced here until about 1898.

Dr. Leonidas E. Best was born on a farm in Elgin County, Ontario, Canada, March 10, 1844. He graduated in arts from the Baptist Institute at Woodstock, Ontario, in September, 1859, and was apprenticed in medicine for three years to Dr. McLaughlin, of Ionia, Ontario, in the Fall of 1861. He was graduated in April, 1865, by the medical department of the University of Victoria, Toronto, and immediately went to Chicago, where he was appointed second assistant surgeon in the military barracks at that place, but soon returned to Canada, and practiced in London, Ontario, ten years, then two years in Overisel, Allegan County, Michigan. In 1878 he settled in Grand Rapids, where he practiced nearly thirty years.

Dr. Thomas D. Bradfield first saw the light in the State of Indiana, Jan. 12, 1843. He took two courses of medicine at the University of Michigan in 1867-68, and graduated at the Detroit Medical College in the Spring of 1869. He entered practice as surgeon of the Copper Falls copper mine, Keweenaw County, and remained there ten years. In 1879 he came to Grand Rapids, but stayed in the city only a year, returning to Lake Superior in 1880. From 1880 to 1884 he was surgeon of the Delaware copper mine, in Keweenaw County, and at the end of this time came permanently to Grand Rapids. Dr. Bradfield was county physician of Keweenaw County; was also superintendent of the poor, supervisor, and United States pension surgeon. He represented the counties of Keweenaw, Ontonagon, Baraga, and Isle Royal in the State Legislature at the sessions of 1875 and 1879. He was a member of the Board of U. S. Pension Examining Surgeons in this city during President Cleveland's first administration and also served several years as city physician of Grand Rapids. Dr. Bradfield died Oct. 18, 1912.

Dr. Henry D. Kendall was born in Greenfield, Mass., May 1, 1815. After taking a partial course in arts, he commenced the study of medicine, graduating in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, at Fairfield, N. Y., in 1838. He was



Demonstrator of Anatomy in his alma mater for a year prior and a year subsequent to graduation. He practiced five years, from 1839 to 1844, in Cleveland, Ohio, and then five years, from 1844 to 1849, in Norwich, Chenango County, New York. In 1849 he was called upon by his father's death to close up the estate, and after that time did not practice medicine. He was engaged in mercantile life until about 1879, at which time he removed to Grand Rapids, residing here until about 1891.

Dr. Walter B. Morrison was born in Grand Rapids, May 6, 1838, and graduated at the Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn, N. Y., in June, 1865. Dr. Morrison served during the Civil War in the volunteer service, being at first hospital steward and later assistant surgeon. He settled at Muskegon in July, 1865, practicing there until 1879, when he removed to Grand Rapids, remaining in this city until 1884. In that year he went to Honduras, Central America, and practiced three years in that country. In 1887 he returned to Muskegon, where he continued to reside throughout his active career. He was city physician of Grand Rapids from May, 1881, to May, 1882, and coroner of Kent County for the years 1883-84.

Dr. Ransom H. Stevens was born in Montpelier, Vt., Jan. 18, 1853. The family moved to Wisconsin in 1860 and came to Michigan in 1870, settling near the city of Grand Rapids, where the parents died in 1887. Dr. Stevens graduated in the literary department of the University of Michigan in 1877, and from the medical department in 1878. He began practice in Grand Rapids Nov. 1, 1879, and with the exception of one year in Detroit practiced here until about 1897.

Dr. Charles E. Hebard first saw the light at Dryden, Lapeer County, Michigan, Feb. 28, 1858. He commenced the study of medicine in 1875, with his father, Dr. Ezra A. Hebard, afterward of Grand Rapids, and entered the medical department of the University of Michigan in the fall of 1876, graduating therein March 26, 1879. While at Ann Arbor, after receiving his degree, he practiced one year at Lapeer, but removed to Grand Rapids at the end of that time, practicing his profession in this city until 1884. In 1881 he purchased a stock of drugs and chemicals on old Canal street, and handled the store in connection with his practice. In the summer of 1884 he left Grand Rapids and went to Kansas, where he practiced five years, returning to this city in July, 1889. He then practiced here until his death, which occurred about 1892.

Dr. William H. Aylesworth was born May 17, 1854, in Adrian, Lenawee County, Michigan. He took a literary course in Adrian College, in 1875-79, and graduated in medicine at the University of Michigan in June, 1882. He practiced at Cedar Springs, Kent County, from 1882 to 1887, and came to Grand Rapids, Nov. 1, 1887, practicing here until about 1891.

Dr. Louis Barth came here in September, 1882, and is still engaged in the practice of his profession, as are also Drs. William F. Hake and Reynold J. Kirkland, who came here in the same year.

Dr. Charles H. Holt was born at Snow Shoe, Centre County, Pennsylvania, March 10, 1854. He graduated at the University of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, in 1882, and settled in Grand Rapids in the Fall of that year. He practiced here until his death, which occurred June 2, 1913.



Dr. Roelof A. Schouten was born at Nunspest, Netherlands, Dec. 5, 1835. He graduated at the medical school of Haarlem, Netherlands, June 29, 1865, and served as surgeon of a Dutch merchant vessel on two voyages to the East Indies, between 1865 and 1869. He settled in Holland, Mich., in 1869, and remained there until 1882, serving as city physician of Holland four years and health officer three years. In 1882 he came to Grand Rapids and practiced here until his death, which occurred Dec. 28, 1906.

Dr. William Clarke was born in Ireland in 1843. He graduated at the Detroit Medical College in 1871; at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in New York, in 1877; at Queen's University of Canada, in 1879, and passed an examination before the Board of Medical Examiners in London, England, in 1880. He came to Grand Rapids in 1883, and practiced here until about 1912.

Dr. John F. Failing was born in Wayne County, New York, Oct. 25, 1841. He graduated at the medical department of Buffalo University, in 1868, and practiced in Illinois and in Kalamazoo and Van Buren Counties, Michigan. He settled at Grand Rapids, in 1883, and practiced here until about 1897, when he removed to Denver, Colo.

Dr. James Mulhern was born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1846. He came to the United States at an early age, took two courses of medical lectures in the University of Michigan in 1867-68, and graduated at the Detroit College of Medicine in 1870. He practiced at Greenville, Mich., thirteen years, and came to Grand Rapids in 1883. He died on Feb. 9, 1910.

Dr. Albert J. Patterson commenced the practice of his profession at Kent City in 1883, and since 1889 has been located at Grand Rapids.

Dr. Benjamin Pyle was born Sept. 27, 1859, at Kalamazoo, Mich. He graduated at Ann Arbor, in the medical department of the University of Michigan, in June, 1883, and settled in Grand Rapids on July 16, following. He practiced his profession here until about 1916.

Dr. Herbert W. Catlin settled in Grand Rapids in May, 1884, and was engaged in the practice of his profession until his death, which occurred Jan. 15, 1918.

Dr. William F. Penwarden was born in Fingal, Elgin County, Canada, Jan. 7, 1860. He graduated at the St. Thomas (Canadian) Collegiate Institute in 1877, and at Williams & Rodgers' International Business College at Rochester, N. Y., in 1878. He then took one course in medicine at the University of Michigan, and two courses at Bellevue Medical College, in New York City, and graduated in the latter March 14, 1883. He practiced one year at Castlewood, Hamlin County, Dakota, and came to Grand Rapids, Sept. 28, 1884. He served some time as county physician of Kent County, and practiced his profession here until his death, Dec. 26, 1902, when both he and his wife were killed in a railway accident in Canada.

Dr. Edward Watson was born in Fingal, Elgin County, Canada, Nov. 27, 1840. He entered the literary department of the University of Michigan in the Fall of 1860, but went into the army in 1861 and never finished his course. Shortly after the close of the Civil War he commenced the study of medicine in New York City, and afterward spent some time in England and France, residing five years, from 1866 to 1871, in Rome. In 1871 he returned to America and, resum-



ing his medical studies, graduated at the University of Michigan in the Spring of 1873. He successively practiced his profession in Plymouth, Mich., Sioux Falls, S. D., and located in Grand Rapids in 1884. Owing to ill health he was compelled to relinquish his practice in 1889, and he served as health officer of Grand Rapids in 1888-89. Regaining his health to some extent, he resumed the practice of his profession and continued it until his death, which occurred about 1901. Dr. Watson was a brother of the late James C. Watson, the distinguished astronomer.

Dr. William H. White was born at Mendon Centre, N. Y., Aug. 21, 1860. He graduated in the department of pharmacy, University of Michigan, taking the degree of Ph. C. in 1882, and from the department of medicine and surgery, with the degree of M. D. in 1884. He came to Grand Rapids in August, 1884, and practiced here until about 1904.

Dr. William A. Wilson was born in Phelps, Ontario County, New York, Feb. 21, 1846. He graduated at the Albany Medical College, at Albany, N. Y., with the class of 1868, and practiced fifteen years in Yates and Steuben Counties, New York. He settled in Grand Rapids in 1884 and continued in the practice here until 1902, when he was elected secretary of the city Board of Health and held that position until 1903.

Dr. Frederick W. Wright was born in Jackson, Mich., March 20, 1859. He graduated at Detroit Medical College, Feb. 29, 1884, and settled in Grand Rapids on July 14 of the same year. He served as city physician, and continued his practice here until his death, which occurred about 1906.

Among the physicians who settled in Grand Rapids in 1855 were Drs. Caspar M. Droste and David E. Welsh, who are here still engaged in the practice of their profession.

Dr. Schuyler C. Graves was born at Kalamazoo, Mich., March 6, 1858, but passed most of his boyhood days in Grand Rapids. He was graduated at the high school here in the summer of 1877, and in the Fall of the same year entered the literary department of the University of Michigan, with the class of 1881, taking the studies of the Freshman year. The following year he matriculated in the medical department, taking his degree, after a three years' course, June 30, 1881. He was assistant demonstrator of anatomy in his alma mater during the session of 1881 and 1882, when he resigned to enter practice. He went to Charlevoix, Mich., in July, 1882, and practiced there three years, with the exception of the winter of 1883-84, at which time he was surgeon of the Delaware copper mine, Keweenaw County, Lake Superior. He was elected coroner of Charlevoix County, in the Fall of 1884. He returned to his home in Grand Rapids in June, 1885, and practiced here until 1916, and since then he has divided his time between a Summer home at Eastmanville and a Winter home in California.

Dr. Teunis A. Boot was born April 1, 1861, at Holland, Ottawa County, Michigan. He graduated in the medical department of the University of Michigan in June, 1886, and settled at Grand Rapids in September of the same year. He removed to Corning, Cal., in 1902.

Dr. Joseph A. Carbert was born in Orangeville, Ontario, Canada,

Feb. 4, 1856. He graduated at the University of Victoria College, Coburg, Ontario, May 12, 1886, taking the degrees of M. D. and C. M. He spent four months in 1886 at the New York Polyclinic, and settled in Grand Rapids on June 1 of the same year. He removed to St. Joseph, Mich., in 1902.

Dr. Oscar L. Dales was born in Urichsville, Tuscarawas County, Ohio, Sept. 23, 1856. He graduated in the medical department of Wooster University, at Cleveland, Ohio, March 4, 1880, and practiced four years subsequent to graduation at Bryan, Ohio, handling a drug store during a portion of this time. He went to Jacksonville, Fla., in 1884, practiced there two years, and came to Grand Rapids on June 6, 1886. He served as assistant city physician in 1887, and continued in the practice here until his death, which occurred June 12, 1906.

Dr. Ernest D. Disbrow was born at East Saginaw, Mich., Feb. 8, 1858, and graduated at Rush Medical College, Chicago, Ill., with the class of 1880. He was demonstrator of chemistry in Rush College from 1878 to 1880, and medical superintendent of St. Mark's Hospital, at Salt Lake City, Utah, from 1881 to 1883. He served as division surgeon of the Union Pacific Railroad in Utah, as deputy coroner of Summit County, Utah, and as deputy United States marshal in what was then the Territory of Utah. He settled for practice in Grand Rapids in 1886, and remained here until 1894.

Dr. Wilbur F. Hoyt was born Jan. 25, 1863, at Battle Creek, Mich. He took the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the Michigan Agricultural College at Lansing, in 1883, and the degree of M. D. at Starling Medical College at Columbus, Ohio, in 1885. He held the position of resident physician at St. Francis Hospital, in Columbus, one year, and then came to Grand Rapids in 1886, remaining here until about 1892.

Dr. John A. McColl settled in Grand Rapids, Aug. 1, 1886, and is yet engaged in the practice of his profession here.

Dr. Emma Nichols-Wanty was born in Cannon, Kent County, Michigan, July 28, 1851, and was graduated at the Woman's Medical College, Chicago, March 2, 1880. She remained in Chicago after graduation, and was house surgeon of the Woman's Hospital for one year. She was appointed assistant to the chair of Physiology and lecturer on Histology in the Woman's Medical College, which position she held four years. She was married June 22, 1886, to George P. Wanty, a member of the Grand Rapids bar, and settled in this city for practice in September of the same year. She continued in the practice until about 1899.

Among the physicians who located here in 1887 were Drs. James A. DeVore, Collins H. Johnston, and Archibald B. Thompson, all of whom are still engaged in the practice.

Dr. Eliphalet G. Edwards was born in London, Ontario, Canada, May 26, 1833. He graduated in medicine and surgery at the McGill University, Montreal, Canada, in 1855. He practiced thirty-two years in London, Ontario, and its vicinity, coming to Grand Rapids in October, 1887. He died here Jan. 18, 1912.

Dr. Hugo Lupinski was born Jan. 15, 1858, at Sheboygan, Wis. He graduated in the department of pharmacy, University of Michigan,



in 1880, taking the degree of Ph. C., and in the medical department in 1882, receiving the degree of M. D. He was assistant demonstrator of anatomy in the University from 1882 to 1887. He came to Grand Rapids as health officer May 17, 1887, and held the position until 1889. He practiced his profession here until his death, which occurred April 7, 1903.

Dr. Edwin B. Strong was born at Reading, Mich., July 6, 1863. He was graduated at the Detroit College of Medicine, in March, 1887, and immediately entered practice at Byron Center, Kent County. He came to Grand Rapids, Jan. 8, 1890, and remained a couple of years.

Dr. Bessie Earle, who settled at Grand Rapids in April, 1888, is still engaged in the practice.

Dr. Roland E. Miller was born at Lockport, N. Y., June 17, 1859. He graduated at the University of New York, New York City, in March, 1886, and practiced in Buffalo, N. Y., two years, from 1886 to 1888. He settled in Grand Rapids in October, 1888, and remained until about 1892.

Dr. David M. Greene was born at Rochester, Mich., March 22, 1853, and graduated at Ann Arbor, in the medical department of the University of Michigan, with the class of 1881. He practiced general medicine seven years at Plainfield and Leslie, Mich., and then went to New York City and took a post-graduate course at the New York Post-Graduate School. He settled in Grand Rapids on June 15, 1889, and practiced his profession here until about 1911.

Dr. Cornelius A. Johnson was born June 2, 1857, in Grand Rapids. He graduated in the medical department of the University of Michigan, June 27, 1889, and settled for practice in Grand Rapids, in September of the same year. He remained here but a short time and then removed to Mancelona, Mich.

Dr. Ralph H. Spencer settled in Grand Rapids in 1889, and is still engaged in the practice here, as is also Dr. Henry Hulst, who removed to Grand Rapids, Jan. 1, 1890.

Dr. Reuben Peterson was born in Boston, Mass., June 29, 1862. His preparatory education was rounded off at the famous Boston Latin School, and from that institution he entered the literary department of Harvard College in the Fall of 1881. Graduating in arts at Harvard in the Summer of 1885, he took up the study of medicine, matriculating in the medical department of Harvard in the Fall of the same year. He pursued his professional studies in this department three years, completing the course in 1888, and he received his degree a year later. He came to Grand Rapids for the practice of his profession in March, 1890. In 1908 he removed to Chicago, Ill., and later to Ann Arbor, Mich.

#### WOMEN PHYSICIANS.

The first woman to practice medicine in the city of Grand Rapids was Frances A. Rutherford, who as before stated is still engaged in the practice in this city. She was born Oct. 8, 1842, at Thurston, Steuben County, New York, of English parents. She entered Elmira Female College, of New York, in 1856, but was obliged to leave the following year on account of ill health. She spent a portion of the following years, until 1862, in teaching, and then began the study of medicine with Rachael Gleason, M. D., the resident physician of the

Elmira Water Cure and graduate of Syracuse University. Miss Rutherford began attending lectures at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1865, and graduated in that college in 1868, spending meanwhile one year in the New York Infirmary for Women and Children as junior assistant, and having special courses of study in diseases of the heart and lungs, and also in operative surgery, in dermatology and microscopy, this being the first class of female physicians that ever received such instructions in operative surgery. In May, 1868, Dr. Rutherford began the practice of medicine in Grand Rapids. She was elected by the common council city physician in 1870, being the first woman to hold that office, either in this or any other city in the United States. She was elected a member of the Michigan State Medical Society, in 1872, being, with Sibelia F. Baker, of Coldwater, and Ruth A. Garry, M. D., of Ypsilanti, the first women so honored. She spent the winter of 1873 in New York City, giving special attention to gynecology, at the Woman's Hospital. In 1878 she was sent as delegate from the Grand Rapids Medical and Surgical Society to the American Medical Association at Chicago, and was the first woman so sent and elected as a regular delegate by that society. The winter of 1882-83 she spent in visiting hospitals and clinics in Berlin and London, where every courtesy was shown by the physicians in charge. From the start she enjoyed a large and remunerative practice.

Following Dr. Rutherford came Emma Nichols-Wanty, Bessie Earle, and others. Louisa M. Butts, a graduate of the Cleveland Homeopathic Medical College, was the first woman to practice medicine according to that system in Grand Rapids. (See Homeopathy below.)

#### MEDICAL SOCIETIES.

In Albert Baxter's History of the City of Grand Rapids (page 694) occurs the following: "There was a 'Grand River Medical Association' as early as 1852, which included in its membership at least six physicians of Grand Rapids. Alonzo Platt was vice-president, and John H. Hollister was secretary." No records of such a society can be found, but the following information is given in the same connection: "It included the profession as far up the river as Ionia. At its annual meeting in June, 1852, it recommended the teaching of the principles of anatomy, physiology and hygiene in the primary schools."

On March 4, 1856, a number of physicians met and organized "The Grand Rapids Medical and Surgical Society," later known as "The Grand Rapids Medical Society." Dr. D. W. Bliss was elected president; W. H. DeCamp, vice-president; A. Platt, corresponding secretary; and C. L. Henderson, recording secretary and treasurer. O. H. Chipman was another prominent member of the organization. The society had a lively existence until the Civil War broke out, at which time, for obvious reasons, interest in the matter waned; but in 1865, after the cessation of military hostilities, the interest revived and the society entered upon a long period of active work and growth. Meetings were held regularly until 1885, when the organization ceased to exist. It was succeeded by the "Grand Rapids Academy of Medicine," organized late in the Fall of 1884, and which continued in existence for a score of years or more.



In November, 1889, a call was issued for a meeting of physicians for the purpose of organizing the "Kent County Medical Society." The organization was effected on Nov. 22, 1889, and the following officers were elected: S. R. Wooster, president; O. C. McDannell, Lowell, first vice-president; P. Schurtz, second vice-president; D. J. Wallace, Sparta, third vice-president; H. W. Catlin, secretary; and T. D. Bradfield, treasurer. It held regular meetings for a number of years and then was allowed to pass "into a state of repose." But it came to life late in the Fall of 1902. Its reorganization was brought about by the newly adopted plan for the reorganization of the component societies of the Michigan State Medical Society. By this plan every county in the State is entitled to a county medical society, and upon application to the State Council it is granted an official charter. This charter confers upon the members membership in the State society, and also makes one eligible for membership in the American Medical Association. Since its reorganization the society has maintained an active existence. The officers for 1918 were Dr. Francis J. Lee, president, and Dr. Frank C. Kinsey, secretary. The society is affiliated with the American and Michigan State Medical Associations and has a large membership. It meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, from October to June, at St. Cecilia Building, and at nearly every meeting a paper is read and discussed, touching some phase of professional work. Many of the papers thus read before the society have been published in the standard medical journals of the country. Besides the general purpose of fostering good feeling and comradeship among the members and promoting the interests of the profession, the society is interested in securing legislation for the protection of the public health and the introduction of better methods of public sanitation. In fact it and its members individually manifest a progressive spirit along all lines that tend to make the environment of the citizen more elevating and life more enjoyable.

#### HOMEOPATHY.

The foregoing portion of this chapter appertains to the allopathic or "regular" school of medicine, the object of which is to produce in the human body suffering from disease a condition different from that in or from which the disease originated, the theory being that if this can be accomplished the disease will cease. Homeopathy proceeds on an entirely different hypothesis. The founder of the homeopathic school was Samuel Hahnemann, a celebrated German physician, a native of Saxony. It is related that, in 1790, while engaged in translating Cullen's *Materia Medica* from English to German, he was not satisfied with the author's explanations of the cure of ague by the use of Peruvian bark. By way of experiment, to ascertain the action of the bark on a healthy body, he took a large dose of it and soon afterward experienced symptoms of ague. After further investigation he arrived at the conclusion that for every known disease there is a specific remedy, and that this remedy will produce in the healthy person symptoms of the disease it is intended to cure. In 1810 he published at Dresden his "Organon of Rational Medicine," in which he set forth his theory, and also proclaimed the advantage of small doses. This work was followed by one on "Materia Medica," which consisted of a



description of the effects of medicines upon persons in good health. From his theory came the school of homeopathy, the fundamental idea of which is expressed by the Latin dictum: "*Similia similibus curantur*," or in plain English: "Like cures like."

In 1843 the first homeopathic physician—John Ellis—came to Grand Rapids. He left after about two years, and was followed by Dr. A. H. Botsford, in 1851, Dr. E. R. Ellis in 1858, and Dr. Charles J. Hempel in 1861. Dr. Botsford resided here until his death in 1879, and Dr. E. R. Ellis removed to Detroit in 1867. Dr. Hempel was a native of Prussia, where he was born in 1811; was educated at a university in his native country and graduated in the medical department of the University of New York, becoming one of its earliest graduates. Before attending medical lectures he had become a convert to homeopathy, and after graduation he began the translation of the leading works of that school, most of which being written in German were thus far closed books to American students. While living in New York he became acquainted with and married a daughter of the late George Coggeshall, of Grand Rapids. In 1856 he was called to the chair of materia medica and therapeutics in the Philadelphia Homeopathic Medical College, and in 1861, upon the death of his father-in-law, he removed with his family to Grand Rapids, where he retained his residence until his death on Sept. 23, 1879. In addition to his translations, Dr. Hempel was also the author of the following original works: "Hempel's Domestic Physician," "Organon of Homeopathy," "A Life of Christ," written in German, "The True Organization of the New Church," and "A System of Materia Medica and Therapeutics," in two volumes, and in the revision of which he, with the aid of Dr. H. R. Arndt, occupied the last hours of his life. His medical works are recognized as authorities by homeopathic physicians.

In 1869, DeForest Hunt came to Grand Rapids and continued in the practice of his profession here until his death, March 10, 1903.

Dr. Isaiah J. Whitfield came from Big Rapids in 1872 and practiced here until his death, Oct. 25, 1901.

Dr. Malcolm C. Sinclair, another disciple of Hahnemann, began practice here in 1873 and continued with a few years interim until his death, which occurred Nov. 26, 1916.

Dr. Louisa M. Butts, the first female physician of the homeopathic school in this city, came in 1874 and built up a good practice. She died in 1904, and has been described as a bright and industrious woman, an honor to her sex and an ornament to the profession. Other women who have practiced medicine in Grand Rapids according to the tenets of homeopathy were Frances S. Hillyer, Phoebe A. French Alley, and Amanda J. Evans. Dr. Hillyer practiced here until about 1905, Dr. Alley moved away in 1891, and Dr. Evans died July 2, 1909.

Among the homeopaths who came to the city between 1874 and 1884 were A. B. Botsford, G. N. Brigham, Robert M. Luton, LaDor Marvin, Hugo R. Arndt, and Herbert Whitworth. Of these Dr. Botsford, who died March 17, 1895, was a brother of Dr. A. H. Botsford, above mentioned. Dr. G. N. Brigham died June 21, 1886, and Robert M. Luton continued in the practice here until about 1909, when he returned to his old home in Canada, where he died. Dr. Marvin, a graduate of the Chicago Homeopathic Medical College, began prac-



tice in 1877 in Grand Rapids, and is still so engaged. Dr. Arndt was born in Prussia and served as a soldier in the Danish War of 1864; located in Grand Rapids in 1878, and was subsequently called to the chair of materia medica and therapeutics and the clinical professorship of nervous diseases in the Homeopathic Medical College of the University of Michigan. Dr. Whitworth was a graduate of the Pulte Medical College at Cincinnati, a native of England, and came from Niles, Mich., to Grand Rapids in 1881. Some years ago he removed to Dodge City, Kan.

Dr. Arthur T. Bodle was born July 18, 1858, at Middletown, N. Y. He obtained his early education in Wallkill Academy, and then journeyed westward and entered the office of Dr. N. B. Delamater, of Chicago, for preparatory study of medicine. Three years later he entered the Chicago Homeopathic Medical College, and graduated there in 1883. His standing in his studies and hospital work commended itself so highly to his professors that soon after graduation he was appointed resident physician of the hospital, but declining the position he went to England, spent five months in the general hospital at Liverpool, and then returned to begin practice at Traverse City, Mich. He remained there over two years, after which he came to Grand Rapids, succeeding to the office and practice of Dr. H. R. Arndt, who in that year accepted a professorship in the University of Michigan. About 1892, Dr. Bodle removed to Northern Michigan.

Dr. Homer C. Brigham, who was called to Grand Rapids in 1886, to take the extensive practice left by the death of his father, Dr. Gershon N. Brigham, is still engaged in the practice here.

Dr. Walter S. Shotwell was born at Newark, N. J., June 14, 1844. He graduated in the literary department of the Kansas State University, in 1874, and from the Homeopathic Medical College of Missouri, at St. Louis, in 1883. He was in active practice three years in Peoria, Ill., and came to Grand Rapids in 1886. He died Nov. 13, 1890.

Dr. Samuel G. Milner was born in Eastern Ohio in 1846. After profiting by the best educational facilities his native place afforded, in the fall of 1868 he entered the literary department of the University of Michigan, in which he received the degree of A. B. in 1872, and that of A. M. in 1876. Immediately after graduation he was appointed to the principalship of the Union School at Grand Rapids, which position he held for thirteen years. In 1885 he entered the Homeopathic Medical College of the University of Michigan, and received the degree of M. D. in 1887. After graduation he was appointed resident physician of the hospital of the Homeopathic Medical College, but declined that to accept the position of assistant to the professor of theory and practice, and to the professor of obstetrics and diseases of women and children in the same institution. Six months later he resigned and returned to Grand Rapids to enter practice. He was for a time on the editorial staff of the Homeopathic Medical Counselor. He continued in the practice here until about 1900, when he removed to Detroit.

Dr. Daniel S. Sinclair has been in the practice of his profession here since 1887.

Dr. Frank L. Hoag was born at Homer, N. Y., Sept. 2, 1857. He acquired his academic education at the academy in his native town



and at the State Normal School at Cortland, N. Y., after which he was for four years principal of the Union School at Accord, N. Y. He then began to study medicine, entered the Chicago Hahnemann Medical College in 1882, and graduated at the Chicago Homeopathic Medical College in 1884. After practicing at Cincinnati and Cortland, N. Y., four years, he determined to leave general practice and devote his time to the special treatment of diseases of the eye, ear, nose, and throat. Accordingly, for about two years he was in New York City, taking special courses in the Polyclinic Hospital, in Prof. Knapp's Ophthalmic and Aural Institute, and in the New York Ophthalmic College and Hospital, in which he graduated in 1889. He began the practice of his specialty in Grand Rapids in July, 1890. He left the city a few years later and located at Ionia.

Dr. S. Porter Tuttle, who came to Grand Rapids in 1901, is still in practice in the city.

In the work of the charity hospitals, homes, dispensaries, etc., of the city the homeopathic physicians have always shown a willingness to contribute their share of professional work, giving their services gratuitously upon request of the patient.

The Grand Rapids Homeopathic Medical Society was organized at an early day by the less than a dozen doctors of that school in the city, and was maintained by them for several years, when it was allowed to pass quietly out of existence. In 1890 the College of Homeopathic Physicians was organized by the homeopaths, and this was a flourishing organization for a number of years.

Grand Rapids has suffered at divers times from epidemics of minor diseases, such as diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever, lagrippe, etc., but none of these has been marked by great mortality. The board of health has always been persistent in its efforts to bring about improved sanitary conditions in the way of securing better drinking water, better sewerage, stopping the sale of unwholesome or adulterated food products, etc., and it is due to these efforts that Grand Rapids today holds the record of being one of the most healthful cities in the country. On this board physicians have been well represented and have always taken the lead in advocating measures for the preservation of the public health. Said one of the leading physicians of the city recently: "Medical progress in the city of Grand Rapids during the past quarter of a century cannot be separated from the medical progress of the world. The medical profession in Grand Rapids maintains a position abreast of the times; her surgeons perform successfully the most difficult operations from day to day, her physicians treat in a scientific manner the most difficult and obscure diseases; those engaged in special work rank among the best in the medical societies. Some of the physicians of Grand Rapids are authors of standard medical works, and the writings of many are quoted in the leading medical literature; and among their members are neurologists and alienists who are frequently called to give testimony in the courts in some of the most difficult cases in medico-legal experience. Surgical appliances and inventions, the products of their ingenuity, in special lines of work are recognized throughout the country, and no person need seek advice in distant cities in order to obtain the latest and best that medical science can afford. The future of medical



science is no doubt very great, and Grand Rapids is well equipped to join the advance. The high standing and lofty aims of her medical practitioners should stimulate a just pride and confidence in all who believe in true scientific progress, and if education and research mean anything the medical profession of Grand Rapids merits consideration."

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### COURTS AND LAWYERS

TERRITORIAL AND EARLY STATE COURTS—CIRCUIT COURT—PROBATE COURT—LIST OF PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS—CIRCUIT COURT COMMISSIONERS — SHERIFFS — MEMBERS OF THE BAR — PERSONAL SKETCHES—BAR ASSOCIATIONS.

The establishment of courts of justice and the installation of the necessary officials were naturally the first work attending the organization of Kent county. As has been stated in a previous chapter, the county was detached from Kalamazoo county and given a civil jurisdiction, March 24, 1836.

Under the Territorial government of Michigan, as established in 1805, the supreme court of the Territory consisted of a chief and two associate justices, appointed by the President of the United States. Their terms of office were "during good behavior," and so they held until 1824, when the "second grade" of Territorial government was established. This court at first had original and exclusive jurisdiction in all cases involving the title to land, criminal cases punishable capitally, and cases of divorce and alimony; afterwards, of all cases beyond the jurisdiction of inferior courts, all cases wherein the United States was a party, and all actions of ejectment. During the existence of the district courts, it had concurrent jurisdiction therewith in civil matters; when the demand exceeded \$500, and after that it was given original and exclusive jurisdiction of claims above \$200. After the organization of county courts, it had original jurisdiction in ejectment and civil actions, when more than \$1,000 was in controversy. It also determined all legal questions arising in circuit courts, on motion for new trial, in arrest of judgments or cases reversed, and it also issued writs of error to circuit and county courts. Under the establishment of the "second grade" of Territorial government, in 1824, the term of office was limited to four years.

The constitution of 1835 provided for a supreme court, the judges of which were to be appointed by the governor, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, to hold for a term of seven years. By an act approved July 16, 1836, the court was made to consist of a chief justice and two associate justices, a majority of whom should constitute a quorum. It was given essentially the same powers, except chancery, that the supreme court and circuit courts of the territory exercised. The State was divided into three circuits, and the supreme court was required to hold an annual term in each circuit.

The revised statutes of 1838 made the supreme court consist of one chief and three associate justices, and gave it "original and appel-

late jurisdiction of all such matters and suits at law, and in equity and in probate cases," as might be lawfully brought before it; also "jurisdiction of suits, actions and matters brought before it by writ of certiorari or writ of error." Authority was also given "to issue writs of error, certiorari, mandamus, habeas corpus, procedendo, superse-deas," and other necessary writs and process for the due execution of the law. The supreme court was, moreover, given a general superintendence over inferior courts. Any two of the justices constituted a quorum for the transaction of business. The revision of 1846 made no essential changes in the composition or the jurisdiction of the supreme court, but altered its annual terms.

The constitution of 1850 provided that for the term of six years the judges of the several circuit courts should be judges of the supreme court. Four of them were to constitute a quorum, and a concurrence of three was necessary to a final decision. There were five circuit judges in the State at that time, and they constituted the first supreme court under the 1850 constitution. The court thus organized had "a general superintending control over all inferior courts," and had "power to issue writs of error, habeas corpus, mandamus, quo warranto, procedendo, and other original and remedial writs." In other cases it was given appellate jurisdiction only. Four annual terms were provided for, and these were fixed by statute as follows: A January term to be held at Detroit, a May term at Kalamazoo, a July term at Adrian, and an October term at Pontiac.

In 1857, acting under constitutional authority, the Legislature organized the supreme court, making it consist of one chief and three associate justices, elected by the people for a term of eight years. The Legislature of 1887 increased the number of justices to five, and the terms of the additional justice and all justices elected after 1887, to ten years. By Act 250 of 1903, the number of justices was increased to eight, five of whom constitute a quorum, and the term of office was reduced to eight years.

Upon the establishment of a State government, equity and common law jurisdiction were separated and vested in distinct courts. All equity powers were vested in a court of chancery exclusively, save that certain exceptional cases might be taken to the supreme court, and appeals by any person aggrieved by the decree or final order of the court of chancery. This court held sessions, in turn, in each of the circuits into which the State was divided by the act establishing circuit courts. All causes were to be heard and determined in the circuits in which they arose. This court was abolished by the revised statutes of 1846, as passed by the Legislature, although the original draft of the revision provided for its continuance, with some modifications intended to simplify and perfect the system. Its jurisdiction was conferred upon the several circuit courts and it has remained there ever since.

#### CIRCUIT COURT.

In 1825 circuit courts were established by name, but were still held by the judges of the supreme court. The circuit court was given original jurisdiction in all civil actions at law where the demand exceeded \$1,000, of actions of ejectment, of all criminal cases punished capitally, and of all cases not exclusively cognizable by other courts,



concurrent jurisdiction with county courts in civil actions beyond the jurisdiction of justices of the peace, and of criminal offenses not punishable capitally, and appellate jurisdiction from county courts. In 1833 the county courts in all the counties of the Territory east of Lake Michigan, except Wayne, were abolished, and their places supplied by "the circuit court of the Territory of Michigan." It consisted of one circuit judge for the entire circuit, and two associate judges for each county. The circuit judge was appointed for four years and the associate judges for three. The court had both chancery and common law jurisdiction and was given original jurisdiction of civil cases at law and crimes not within the jurisdiction of a justice of the peace and appellate jurisdiction of such as were. It might also determine questions of law arising on motions for new trial or in arrest of judgment. The circuit courts already existing were now called superior circuit courts, and were empowered to issue writs of error to the circuit courts. By act approved March 26, 1836, the State was divided into three circuits, and judges of the supreme court were to perform the duties of circuit judges. These courts were given the same powers and jurisdiction as the territorial circuit courts under the act of 1833, except in chancery matters. By the revision of 1846, the court of chancery was abolished and chancery powers conferred upon the several circuit courts. Since then the jurisdiction of circuit courts has been essentially as at present. The constitution of 1850 made the office of circuit judge elective, and the term of office six years. By an act of April 8, 1851, the State was apportioned into eight circuits, the Eighth being composed of the counties of Barry, Kent, Ottawa, Ionia, Clinton, and Montcalm. The Eighth circuit remained unchanged until 1858, when Ottawa County was detached and together with Allegan, Newaygo, Oceana, Mason, Manistee, Manitou, Grand Traverse, and several unorganized counties was made to form the Ninth district. The counties of Barry, Kent, Ionia, Clinton, and Montcalm remained together as the Eighth circuit from that time until, by Act No. 43, of the Public Acts of 1871, Kent and Barry Counties were constituted a new circuit, denominated the Seventeenth. By an act of the Legislature of 1889, a second circuit judge was provided for the county, and at its 1913 session the Legislature provided a third judge.

Kent County was organized but a short time before the establishment of the State government, when equity and common law jurisdiction were separated and vested in distinct courts. The ludicrous side of judicial life was illustrated by the system of associate judges. This plan, which went in vogue in 1836, provided that two citizens act as associate judges—theoretically supporting the legal subtleties of the president judge with their native shrewdness and knowledge of human nature—and until 1846 this plan was continuously in operation. Judge Thomas M. Cooley commented upon this judicial arrangement in an address. In speaking of the associate judges he said: "Generally they were what may justly be called solid and weighty men. Their duty was to do nothing, and they did it faithfully, and though they sometimes slept on their posts, yet sleeping or waking they performed the duty equally well. Of how very few public officers can we truthfully say this. They were a harmo-



nious element in the court, and never disturbed the business by intermeddling. Excellent as they were, it would be ungracious to say we want no more of side judges, and we forbear."

From 1836 to 1852 the following judges visited and held court on the circuit bench of Kent County, being entitled thereto *ex officio* from their position on the supreme bench. Epaphroditus Ransom, Charles W. Whipple, Edward Mundy, and George Martin, the last named being the first resident lawyer of Kent County to reach the dignity of circuit judge.

Judge George Martin was born at Middlebury, Vt., June 30, 1815. When scarcely out of his boyhood he entered Middlebury College, and was graduated there, the youngest of his class, in 1833, at eighteen years of age. He then began the study of law, the first year in the office of his uncle, Harvey Bell, of Montpelier, whom Chancellor Kent considered one of the ablest jurists of his day in New England, and afterward with the lawyer-novelist, Daniel P. Thompson, of the same place, author of "May Martin, or the Money Diggers," "The Green Mountain Boys," and several other novels. In September, 1836, Young Martin came to Grand Rapids, where he settled for the practice of his profession and resided during the rest of his life. In 1849 he was elected county judge, and in 1851 was chosen circuit judge, in which capacity he was, under the then prevailing system, a member of the supreme court. When the present organization of the State Supreme Court was established, Judge Martin was elected, in 1857, its first chief justice, in which position he continued to preside over that court until his death, which occurred at Detroit, Dec. 15, 1867.

Judge Martin was succeeded as judge of the Eighth circuit by Louis S. Lovell, who served from January, 1858, to January, 1870, being elected to a second term. Birney Hoyt was then elected in the new Seventeenth district (Kent and Barry Counties), and also served two terms, or until 1882, when Robert M. Montgomery was chosen, and the latter was succeeded in 1888 by William E. Grove. By an act of the Legislature, as before stated, in 1889, a second circuit judge was provided for Kent County, and Marsden C. Burch was appointed to the position, to hold the office until Dec. 31, 1893. In the November election, 1890, Allen C. Adsit was a candidate on the Democratic ticket for the office. It was claimed by the Democrats that the appointment of Judge Burch was invalid after a general election, while it was claimed by the Republicans that the appointment was legal, and no nomination was made. On Feb. 5, 1891, it was decided by the supreme court that the Democratic contention was right. Judge Burch at once abdicated the office and Judge Adsit took his place, which he held until Jan. 1, 1900. At the Spring election of 1899 Alfred Wolcott and Willis B. Perkins were elected circuit judges. They were re-elected in 1905, but on March 8, 1908, Judge Wolcott died and John S. McDonald was appointed to succeed him. At the Spring election of 1911 Judges McDonald and Perkins were chosen to succeed themselves, and in November, 1912, William B. Brown was elected as the third judge for Kent County, in accordance with Act No. 179, passed by the 1911 Legislature. At the Spring election of 1917, Judges Brown, Perkins, and McDonald were re-elected and are the present incumbents.



## PROBATE COURT.

In 1818 the Territorial legislative body provided for a court of probate to be established in each county, the office to be held by some "able and learned person," appointed by the Governor, from which court appeal might be taken to the supreme court. These courts continued in operation until after Michigan had become a State. The revised statute of 1838 made the office of judge of probate elective, for a term of four years. In different cases appeals were allowed to the circuit, or to the supreme court. The revision of 1846 provided for direct appeals to the circuit court only. The constitution of 1850 provided for a probate court in each organized county, the judge of which was to be elected for a term of four years. The new constitution of 1909 gives probate courts original jurisdiction in all cases of juvenile delinquents and dependents.

The office of probate judge is peculiarly local and intimately associated with the affairs of all the people, and it has been filled in Kent County by some of her best citizens. In fact, it may be said that the county has been singularly fortunate in the selection of its probate judges, included in the list being able lawyers, and those who have filled the position have been generally pure-minded men, giving character and dignity to the court, and reflecting honor upon the county and themselves.

The first judge of the probate court of Kent County was the Hon. Jefferson Morrison, of Grand Rapids. He was appointed by Gov. Stevens T. Mason, soon after the organization of the county, in 1836. Judge Morrison was one of the small band of pioneers who came to Kent County in that same year. He was a man of great force of character and kindness of heart. Owing to the sparseness of the population, the business of the court could not have been so onerous as to interfere very seriously with his other avocations, and the records show but two cases the first year, one the second, three the third, and four the fourth. On Jan. 1, 1845, he was succeeded by Hon. James A. Davis, of Paris township, who held the office four years. Little is known regarding the life, character or career of Judge Davis, save what appears in the records of his own court, and these show him to have been a painstaking, careful official.

Hon. Solomon L. Withey succeeded to the office in January, 1849. Judge Withey was a lawyer of learning and ability, and was possessed of that culture, refinement and kindness of heart which eminently fitted him for the discharge of the delicate and responsible trust. He had pursued his legal studies with A. D. Rathbone and Hon. George Martin, at that time two of the ablest lawyers in Michigan, and the latter of whom was afterward chief justice of the highest court of the State. Judge Withey was admirably fitted for judge of the probate court in a new county, where he had few precedents to guide him. He came to Michigan with his father in 1836, settling in Grand Rapids, which even then had the promise of becoming the future great city of Western Michigan. He held various offices of trust and honor—probate judge, member of the State Legislature, member of the Constitutional Convention of 1867, and United States Judge for the Western District of Michigan. In all the relations of life he faithfully discharged whatever duty devolved upon him. He



died at San Diego, Cal., April 25, 1886, having lived a useful and honored life.

Hon. Robert P. Sinclair, who succeeded Judge Withey in the office, brought to the discharge of its duties, not only talents of the highest order and a thorough knowledge of the law, but a kindness of heart which eminently fitted him for the position. Among the members of the bar of Kent County few have attained a more prominent position. Admitted at the age of twenty-nine, he commenced practice in 1848 and soon gained prominence in his profession. In 1852 he was elected judge of probate and served four years. In 1866, he was appointed by Andrew Johnson to the position of Collector of Internal Revenue at Grand Rapids, but after serving until March 4, 1867, the Senate refused to confirm his appointment. That the people of the county appreciated his services as judge of probate is evidenced by the fact that he was renominated on the Democratic ticket in 1856, and again in 1860; but he was unsuccessful, owing to the accession to power of the Republican party.

In 1857 Judge Sinclair was succeeded by Hon. William A. Robinson, who held the office until 1865, when he was succeeded by Hon. Benjamin A. Harlan.

Judge Harlan was a good lawyer, and of a most genial and kindly nature. Sympathetic and generous, he brought to the discharge of the duties of the office qualities and qualifications rarely found combined in one man. Nearly all the people in the county personally knew and loved him, and their esteem was evidenced by three times electing him judge of probate of the county. He held the office from Jan. 1, 1865, until Jan. 1, 1877. He was succeeded by Cyrus E. Perkins.

Judge Cyrus E. Perkins was born at Lawrence, Mass., Oct. 9, 1847, and died at the Blodgett Hospital in Grand Rapids, May 23, 1918. After coming to this city he attended the public schools and was graduated in the local high school in 1866. He studied law in the office of Judge B. A. Harlan and was admitted to the bar in 1884. In the meantime, however, he was elected judge of probate, in 1876, on the Republican ticket, and served eight years. At the end of his second term he was succeeded by Lyman D. Follett, who resigned May 30, 1887. Judge Perkins was then appointed by Governor Luce to fill the unexpired term, and at the election in 1888 he was again chosen to that office. He was elected to succeed himself, in 1892, rounding out eighteen years in the probate judgeship. Later, he entered a law partnership with L. W. Wolcott. Mr. Perkins was active in the management of the New Era Association for a number of years and was president of the organization at the time of his death. At one time he was president of the Board of Education and also was identified with various business interests. He was president of the Grand Rapids Veneer works and a director of the Imperial Furniture Company and the Citizens' Telephone Company. He was also deeply interested in social welfare and charitable work and served in an official capacity in local organizations.

In 1896 Harry D. Jewell was elected to the position of probate judge, and was re-elected in 1900, 1904, and 1908, serving in all, sixteen years. He was succeeded in office by Clark E. Higbee, who was elected in 1912, re-elected in 1916, and is the present incumbent of the position.



## PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS.

Following is a list of those who have held the office of prosecuting attorney in Kent County, with the year of their appointment or election, since the establishment of the State government, in 1837. In a number of cases the occupancy of this office has been the beginning of a distinguished career in the law: 1837, Hiram Osgood; 1842, Simeon M. Johnson; 1843, Thomas B. Church; 1846, Alfred D. Rathbone; 1850, Edward E. Sargeant; 1852, John T. Holmes; 1856, E. S. Eggleston; 1858, Stephen G. Champlin; 1860, Thaddeus Foote; 1862, E. G. D. Holden; 1866, Byron D. Ball; 1868, Andrew J. Reeves; 1872, E. A. Burlingame; 1876, Stephen H. Ballard; 1878, Frank F. Kutts; 1880, Fred A. Maynard; 1882, Isaac M. Turner; 1886, Samuel D. Clay; 1888, William J. Stuart; 1890, William F. McKnight; 1892, Alfred Wolcott; 1894, Frank A. Rodgers; 1900, William B. Brown; 1906, John S. McDonald; 1908, William B. Brown; 1912, Earl F. Phelps; 1914, Edward N. Barnard; 1916, Cornelius Hoffius, present incumbent.

Hiram Osgood was an early attorney of Kent County who settled in Grandville. He was appointed prosecuting attorney by Judge Ransom at the beginning of the first term of circuit court held in the county. He owned the Grandville plat and hoped and worked to make it a great city, but his hopes were doomed to disappointment. He died at Grandville in the early part of 1843.

Simeon M. Johnson had an agency for fire insurance as early as 1837. He was later a newspaper editor, a lawyer and politician, and about 1852 removed to Washington.

Thomas B. Church was born at Dighton, Bristol County, Massachusetts, Sept. 13, 1813. His early education was mostly by private tutorship, and this was followed by a classical course and graduation in Trinity College at Hartford, Conn. He came to Michigan in 1838, and was engaged for a time in surveying and civil engineering. studied law at Marshall and also at Harvard College, was admitted to the bar in 1841, and in the Fall of 1842 came to Grand Rapids to reside. He was appointed by the Governor prosecuting attorney, and in that capacity conducted the first murder trial here, that of E. M. Miller, who was convicted, May 25, 1843, of the murder of an Indian woman near Muskegon, in December previous. He was a member of the State constitutional convention in 1850, and held several other representative positions of public trust and responsibility, which are chronicled in other parts of this history. He was the father of Frederick S. Church, the celebrated artist. He died in Grand Rapids, July 30, 1890.

Alfred D. Rathbone was born in Aurora, N. Y., Jan. 18, 1806. He was educated, studied law and was admitted to the bar in his native State. At the age of thirty he came to Grand Rapids and opened a law office, in 1836, and continued a resident of the place until his death, April 5, 1856. He served as postmaster of Kent, the old village name of Grand Rapids. In 1846 he was appointed prosecuting attorney of Kent County and held the office four years.

Edward E. Sargeant was for many years a business partner of Solomon L. Withey and John Ball. He was village attorney in 1848, and in 1850 helped to draft the new city charter. In 1850 he was



elected prosecuting attorney, and in his term of office prosecuted the celebrated case of the People vs. Mills. In addition to his legal business, Sargeant also wrote editorials for the Grand Rapids Enquirer. He died in 1858, aged thirty-seven years.

John T. Holmes was born Dec. 11, 1815, at Carlisle, Schoharie County, New York. In early youth he attended the common schools in Niagara County and a select school in Cherry Valley. His parents hoped he would become a clergyman, but as he was not thus inclined, he followed farm work and clerking in a store during the latter part of his minority. In 1837 he came to Detroit, passed several months in the southern part of the State, and then came to Grand Rapids, arriving Feb. 14, 1838. Here he engaged at first as a clerk, but in 1839, with William G. Henry, he opened a general assortment store where now is the western part of the Morton House, under the firm name of Henry & Holmes. This continued about three years, and during the time he read law as he found opportunity, afterward pursuing that study in the office of Bridge & Calkins. On May 17, 1843, together with Solomon L. Withey and Sylvester Granger, he was admitted to the bar of the Kent circuit, Justice Epaphroditus Ransom presiding, and they were the first students thus regularly admitted in this county. In 1845 Mr. Holmes was chosen justice of the peace, which office he resigned after serving three years. He was also for some years master in chancery, and held that office at the time when its duties were transferred to circuit court commissioners. In 1852 and again in 1854 he was elected prosecuting attorney for Kent County, serving in that office four years. In 1860 he was the Democratic nominee for State senator, and in 1862 the candidate of the same party for attorney-general of the State, leading his associates upon the ticket, but in common with them was defeated. In 1875, when the Superior Court of Grand Rapids was established, he was elected judge of that tribunal and served the full term of six years. He was elected judge of the police court in April, 1882, receiving a majority of 1,713 out of a total of 6,735 votes. He was re-elected in 1886, and again in April, 1890, this time by a plurality of 2,215, and the largest vote ever given a candidate up to that time. He held the office until his death, June 16, 1891.

Ebenezer S. Eggleston was born at Batavia, N. Y., May 12, 1825. In 1837 he removed to Litchfield, Hillsdale County, Michigan. There he received a good education in the public schools, and afterward studied law. In 1851 he came to Grand Rapids, and here his name in connection with law practice became "familiar as household words." He was admitted to the bar in 1852, and quickly won a high reputation for ability in his profession, and ranked among leading lawyers of this part of Michigan. In 1856 he was elected prosecuting attorney for Kent County, and discharged the duties of that office zealously and ably. In 1861 he was appointed by President Lincoln consul to Cadiz, Spain, and served efficiently in that capacity during four years. In 1872 he was elected representative to the Legislature from the First district of Grand Rapids, and served during the ensuing session in the House, where he was an active member of the Judiciary Committee, and chairman of the Committee on Private Corporations. After that time he devoted his attention to his law practice until his death, which occurred Aug. 28, 1892.



Stephen G. Champlin was born at Kingston, Ulster County, New York, July 1, 1827. He was educated at the common schools and at the academy at Rhinebeck, N. Y. At the age of fifteen years he began the study of medicine, and at eighteen commenced practice as a physician, soon acquiring an extensive practice in Ulster County, New York. At twenty-one years of age he gave that up, studied law, passed a creditable examination in the supreme court at Albany, was admitted to the bar at twenty-two, and began the practice of law at Richmond, Ulster County, New York. In 1853 he came to Grand Rapids and entered partnership with Lucius Patterson, then among the leading lawyers of Western Michigan. In 1856 he was elected judge of the Recorder's court of the city, and served two years. In 1858 he was elected prosecuting attorney for Kent County, and ably performed the duties of that office for one term. At the breaking out of the Civil War he enlisted, and on May 13, 1861, was commissioned major of the Third Michigan infantry. Soon after reaching the field the command of the regiment devolved upon him, and he was commissioned colonel, Oct. 28, 1861. At Fair Oaks, Va., he was severely wounded, but was in the field again at the siege of Yorktown and at the battle of Williamsburg. On Nov. 29, 1862, he was promoted to brigadier general. He obtained leave of absence, came home to Grand Rapids, and sank to his death Jan. 24, 1864, one of the noblest of the Union army, and lamented by all who knew him.

Thaddeus Foote was born in Connecticut, April 27, 1821. He was graduated at Yale in the class of 1844, and was a frater of the famous Skull and Bones. He was graduated at the Harvard Law School in 1846, and practiced in Ohio for a time, coming to Grand Rapids about 1850. At the breaking out of the Civil War he enlisted in the service and became eventually major of the Sixth and colonel of the Tenth Michigan cavalry. He served one term as prosecuting attorney for Kent County and was pension agent in Grand Rapids after the close of the Civil War. He died Feb. 3, 1903.

Ebenezer G. D. Holden—(See chapter on Politics and Official Honors.)

Byron D. Ball—(See chapter on Politics and Official Honors.)

Andrew J. Reeves was born at Ellicottville, Cattaraugus County, New York, Dec. 15, 1829. He obtained his education at Caryville Collegiate Institute, and afterward was a teacher there. He also taught at Elba, Oakfield, and Batavia, in Genesee County, until 1854. In 1855 he went to Burlington, Iowa, and operated a year in grain in connection with D. W. Irwin, later of the Board of Trade in Chicago. He then bought the Bucher House at Medina, Orleans County, New York, and a year later embarked in a commercial enterprise at Mendon, St. Joseph County, Michigan. In 1860 he went to Ann Arbor and attended the first year of the law school there, taking lectures two terms and graduating in 1861, and he was admitted to practice the same year. He returned to Mendon and remained there until May 16, 1864, and held the offices of justice of the peace and town clerk. He then came to Grand Rapids and entered the law office of Byron D. Ball, and the following year was with John W. Champlin. A year later the partnership of Ball & Reeves was established and continued until Mr. Reeves was elected prosecuting attorney for Kent County, in 1868, a position he held two terms.



Edwin A. Burlingame was born in Sterling township, Windham County, Connecticut, in the year 1832. His education was obtained in the traditional "little red school house" of New England, in the intervals of farm work. The next four years of his life were spent in the cotton mills of his native town, where he proved himself so efficient an operator that he rose to the position of foreman. Seeking a wider field, he completed a course of studies in the New York Central College. Until 1855 he taught school in Central New York, removing in that year to Madison, Wis., as the representative of an Eastern publishing house, afterward representing the same firm at Ann Arbor, Mich., and Janesville, Wis. In 1863, he located in Kent County, purchasing a farm just south of Grand Rapids, and turning his attention to legal studies entered the law department of the University of Michigan, and, having graduated with the class of 1869, commenced the practice of law in Grand Rapids. He was twice elected prosecuting attorney for Kent County, and, in 1887, was elected to the bench of the Superior Court of Grand Rapids. He was re-elected in 1893, and upon his retirement from the bench in May, 1899, resumed the practice of law. In 1905 he removed to Ishpeming, Mich., and there he died Feb. 13, 1909.

Stephen H. Ballard was born July 19, 1836, at Bennington, Vt. In 1839 his father, the Rev. James Ballard, with his family, came to Grand Rapids, where Stephen resided until 1880. His education was obtained in the schools of Grand Rapids and at Ann Arbor. In 1858-59 he was engaged with a party in surveying the then wild lands of Northern Minnesota. After spending about one and a half years in that business he returned to Grand Rapids and commenced the study of law. After a short time he attended the law school at Ann Arbor for one year, and then entered the office of Holmes & Champlin, where he read law until his enlistment in the army, Aug. 4, 1862. He was admitted to practice by the Kent circuit court in the summer of the same year. He was mustered into the military service as second lieutenant of Company A, Sixth Michigan cavalry, and was a member of that company until he was honorably mustered out of the service, June 21, 1865, by reason of the close of the war. He was commissioned first lieutenant and appointed captain. He returned to Grand Rapids and after reading law and attending the law school at Ann Arbor, in January, 1866, he commenced practice as a member of the firm of Holmes & Ballard. From then until 1880 he was in the active practice of his profession. He was for a time a member of the firm of Standish & Ballard and assistant United States district attorney for the western district of Michigan. In 1876 he was elected prosecuting attorney for Kent County and served one term. In 1880 he was forced by failing health to a change of climate, and he went to Colorado, where he remained until a short time before his death, which occurred Nov. 9, 1890.

Frank F. Kutts was born Nov. 17, 1837, in the village of Brooklyn, Jackson County, Michigan. He obtained his early education in the common schools of Brooklyn, and afterward attended the Michigan Union College, at Leoni. About the year 1868 he entered the university at Ann Arbor and graduated in the law department in 1870, being admitted to the bar at Jackson the following Fall. He came to



Kent County and settled at Rockford in December, 1870, and in 1876 he came to Grand Rapids. He was elected prosecuting attorney in 1878, serving one term, and he continued to reside in Grand Rapids until 1899, when he resumed his residence in Rockford.

Isaac M. Turner was born in England, April 6, 1851, and came to this country in 1868, going to Shelby County, Illinois, just on the borders of "Egypt," to join his brother, for whom he worked on a farm. In 1878 he came to Grand Rapids, after a course in the Michigan University Law School, and entered the office of Judge Grove. The same year he was admitted to the bar and at once began practice on his own account, and by his ability he won for himself an enviable position at the bar. He was elected prosecuting attorney by the Democratic party in 1882, and served two terms, 1883-1887. In 1889 he was elected alderman from the old Eighth ward, and when the ward was divided he was elected from the new Ninth ward. In 1892 he was the Democratic candidate for mayor, but was defeated by William J. Stuart, the city being overwhelmingly Republican in that year. Mr. Turner was stricken with illness while on a professional visit in Washington, D. C., and he died in that city Feb. 5, 1895.

Samuel D. Clay was born in Peremont, N. H., May 6, 1838, and early in life took up the study of law, in which he was unusually successful. After three years' study with an uncle, who was a prominent attorney in Maine, he was admitted to practice at the State bar at Augusta, in the Spring of 1861. He opened an office at Gardiner, Me., where he operated until 1868, when he transferred his business to Grand Rapids. Before coming here he was engaged for a short time in the newspaper business, at one time publishing a little paper on one side of the street while he had as his rival in the newspaper business across the way, James G. Blaine, who was one of his closest personal friends. Soon after locating in Grand Rapids Mr. Clay made a name for himself by his brilliant oratory, and he was one of the most prominent "stump" speakers of the day. He was elected prosecuting attorney in 1886, and was known throughout the State as one of the best criminal lawyers of this commonwealth. The latter part of his life was spent with his brother, D. P. Clay, who made his home on a 600-acre farm in Newaygo County. Mr. Clay's death occurred April 21, 1911.

William J. Stuart was born in Yankee Springs township, Barry County, Michigan, Nov. 1, 1844. The days of his boyhood and early youth were spent on the farm, until 1859, when he entered the public school at Hastings. There he remained two years, and then entered the high school at Kalamazoo. He continued his course there until June, 1863, when he graduated with the first class from that institution. After teaching one term of country school, he entered Michigan University in March, 1864, and pursued the classical course of study until the middle of his junior year. After spending several months in Illinois, in the Fall of 1866 he was employed as superintendent of the Union school at Hastings. He occupied this position one year, and then returned to the Michigan University, completed his course of study, and graduated in the class of 1868, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts. He then returned to Hastings and occupied his former position in the public schools for two years, and, at the close



of his school season, commenced reading law in Kalamazoo. In the Fall of that same year he returned to Ann Arbor and entered the law school of the State University. He remained there until he completed his course and graduated in the Spring of 1872, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Laws. He then returned to Kalamazoo and practiced his profession until November, when he came to Grand Rapids, and on Jan. 1, 1873, entered the office of E. A. Burlingame as assistant prosecuting attorney of Kent County. He received the appointment of city attorney of Grand Rapids, in the Spring of 1880, and held the position two terms. In May, 1888, he was appointed prosecuting attorney for Kent County to fill the vacancy caused by the removal of the incumbent, and was afterward elected for a full term. In April, 1905, he was elected judge of the Superior Court of Grand Rapids, was re-elected in 1911, and filled that position until his death, Jan. 20, 1915. In addition to these offices, Mr. Stuart held other positions, both political and educational. For two years he was a member of the Board of Education of Grand Rapids. In 1892 he was elected mayor of the city and re-elected in 1893, serving two terms.

William F. McKnight was born in Cascade, Kent County, Michigan, July 23, 1863. He attended the common schools of Cascade until he was sixteen years old and then taught school two years. He then entered the normal college at Valparaiso, Ind., in which he graduated with the degree of A. B. in 1884. He graduated in the law department of the University of Michigan in 1887, and was admitted to the bar in 1888 at Grand Rapids. He practiced alone for a short time and then formed a partnership with G. C. Godwin and Allen C. Adsit, which partnership continued until 1890, when Mr. McKnight was elected prosecuting attorney and Mr. Adsit to the bench. He served one term in office and then practiced his profession to the time of his death, which occurred May 19, 1918.

Alfred Wolcott was born in Summit County, Ohio, March 17, 1858. He attended the country schools of his native county until fifteen years of age, after which he taught school a short time. At the age of sixteen he entered the preparatory department of the Western Reserve College at Hudson, Ohio, and graduated in June, 1880, with the degree of B. A. He then went to Cincinnati, where he read law for one year in the office of E. P. Bradstreet. He came to Grand Rapids in 1882, and entered the law office of Stuart & Sweet, where he completed his studies and was admitted to the bar in May, 1883. He was elected circuit court commissioner in 1888, and served as such two years. In 1892 he was elected prosecuting attorney and was re-elected in 1894. A partnership was formed with Charles E. Ward, under the firm name of Wolcott & Ward, and this continued until Mr. Wolcott was elected Judge of the circuit court, in 1899. He assumed the duties of this office on Jan. 1, 1900, and in 1905 was re-elected without opposition for another term of six years. He died March 8, 1908.

#### CIRCUIT COURT COMMISSIONERS.

The constitution of 1850 stipulated that "The Legislature may provide by law for the election of one or more persons in each organized county, who may be vested with judicial powers not exceeding those



of a judge of the circuit court at chambers." In compliance therewith the Legislature created the elective office of Circuit Court Commissioner. The incumbents of the office have been as follows: 1852, Charles C. Rood; 1854, Thaddeus Foote; 1856, Eben S. Eggleston; 1858, Eben Smith, Jr.; 1864, Eben Smith, Jr., and Henry E. Thompson; 1866, Eben Smith, Jr., and G. H. White; 1868, Eben Smith, Jr., and Omar H. Simonds; 1870, James B. Willson and Omar H. Simonds; 1872, James B. Willson and L. W. Wolcott; 1876, James B. Willson and Edward M. Adams; 1878, Daniel E. Corbitt and Edward M. Adams; 1880, James B. Willson and Lyman D. Follett; 1882, Frank F. Kutts and Lyman D. Follett; 1884, Everett D. Comstock and Joseph Wurzburg; 1888, Dwight Goss and Alfred Wolcott; 1890, Walter H. Hughes and John H. Rozema; 1892, Everett D. Comstock and Charles W. McGill; 1894, Gerrit H. Albers and Charles W. McGill; 1896, Gerrit H. Albers and William B. Brown; 1898, John W. Powers and William B. Brown; 1900, John W. Powers and Harry L. Creswell; 1902, Earl R. Stewart and Harry L. Creswell; 1904, Earl R. Stewart and John A. Verkerke; 1910, Edward L. Eardley, present incumbent.

Charles C. Rood was born in Vermont, Aug. 24, 1815. The family came to Michigan and settled in Oakland County, about 1821 or 1822. He studied law for a time in Detroit, later in Marshall, and in 1846 came to Grand Rapids, where the remainder of his life was spent. He died Feb. 21, 1891.

Henry E. Thompson came here as a young man and married a daughter of Rev. James Ballard, the pioneer Congregational minister and old-time circuit rider. In the Civil War Thompson was captain of Company A, Sixth Michigan cavalry. On June 10, 1863, he became lieutenant-colonel, and was wounded in action at Hunterstown, Pa., July 2, following. On March 6, 1864, he was brevetted colonel of United States volunteers, and he was honorably discharged for disability June 6, 1864. He practiced law for a considerable time in Grand Rapids, but in 1901 he removed to California, and he died in San Jose, that State, Jan. 6, 1913.

George H. White was born in Saratoga Springs, N. Y., July 17, 1836. He was educated in the schools of that famous resort of olden days, and studied law in the office of Chancellor Walworth. He came to Grand Rapids in 1856, and here he resided until his death, May 28, 1902.

James B. Willson was born in 1823, at Willoughby, Ohio. He graduated at the Western Reserve College, at Hudson, Ohio, in 1846, and afterward fitted for his profession at Yale Law School. He came to Grand Rapids in 1859 and practiced law here until about 1885. He was elected circuit court commissioner in 1870, and by re-elections served continuously until 1879, and he was again elected in 1880.

Laurens W. Wolcott was born in the State of New York, Feb. 8, 1843. He received his early education in the schools of New York, and finished preparation for college in a school at Batavia, Ill. On Sept. 10, 1861, he enlisted as a private in Company D, Fifty-second Illinois infantry, and served in the Army of the Tennessee, from its organization for the Fort Donelson campaign until the close of the



war, having by successive promotions received the grade of first lieutenant. In 1868 and 1869 he attended law lectures at the University of Michigan. In 1869 he was admitted to the bar and became a resident of Grand Rapids. In 1872 he was elected circuit court commissioner for Kent County and was re-elected in 1874. He served several years on the Board of Education and was at one time its president. He died March 29, 1909.

Dwight Goss was born in Portage County, Ohio, Feb. 18, 1857. He attended school in Portage County until ten years of age, when his father moved to Clinton County, Michigan, where Dwight again attended school and was graduated in the Ionia High School in 1879. The following year he occupied himself in farming and teaching school, then entered the literary department of the University of Michigan, studying two years, after which he took a course in law at the same institution. Then he came to Grand Rapids, where he spent one and a half years in the office of Smiley & Earle, as clerk. In 1886 he was admitted to the bar and commenced practice Jan. 1, 1887. He was appointed assistant United States attorney for the Western District of Michigan in May, 1898, and filled the position until the Spring of 1902. In 1906 he published a history of Grand Rapids, in two volumes. He died March 29, 1909.

John A. Verkerke was born in the Netherlands, June 30, 1857. He came to Grand Rapids at the age of nine years and here received his education, graduating in the high school at seventeen. He held various positions of trust in the employment of business firms until Jan. 1, 1893, when he was appointed deputy county clerk, which position he filled creditably. He was also in the same year elected alderman from the old Eleventh ward and during his service pursued his studies of the law at his office and at home, and in 1896 was admitted to the bar by Judge Adsit. In 1904 he was elected circuit court commissioner and served in that capacity until his death, which occurred Oct. 25, 1909.

#### SHERIFFS.

The first executive officer of the courts in Kent County was Ezra Reed, who settled near Reed's Lake in 1834, and was elected sheriff at the first election, in 1836. Aaron Russell was elected in 1838, and served until 1841, when Harry Eaton assumed the duties. Messrs. Reed and Russell were among the earliest settlers in the county, and their successors in the office of sheriff, with the years of their election to office, are as follows: 1840, Harry Eaton; 1842, Solomon Withey; 1844, C. P. Babcock; 1846, DeWitt Shoemaker; 1848, Harvey K. Rose; 1850, Leonard Snyder; 1854, Daniel S. T. Weller; 1856, Anson N. Norton; 1860, Sluman S. Bailey; 1864, William Thornton; 1866, Sluman S. Bailey; 1868, Jesse F. Wyckoff; 1872, Isaac Haynes; 1876, Freeling W. Peck; 1880, Isaac F. Lamoreaux; 1882, Lyman T. Kinney; 1886, Loomis K. Bishop; 1890, John McQueen; 1892, Isaac F. Lamoreaux; 1894, Nathaniel Rice; 1895, Irving Woodworth; 1900, Leman H. Chapman; 1904, Albert A. Carroll; 1908, William J. Hurley; 1912, Ed. O'Donnell; 1914, Charles R. Berry, present incumbent.

Harry Eaton was bred a farmer in Vermont, came here in 1836, and engaged in mercantile trade and lumbering. He was elected sheriff of Kent County in 1840, and was the first treasurer of Walker



township. He was also one of the charter members of Grand River Lodge, No. 34, F. and A. M., and at his death, in 1859, his funeral was attended by the Grand Lodge of Masons, then in session here. He was best remembered as a genial and entertaining host at a neat little grocery and restaurant which stood where now is the middle portion of the Pantlind Hotel Block.

Solomon Withey came to Grand Rapids from Vermont and for a time was landlord of the Grand River Exchange, subsequently named Bridge Street House. The first year or two he lived at the north end of Ottawa, next to Coldbrook street, where he made brick. He was elected sheriff in 1842, and after the expiration of his term moved to Ada, where he died in 1851, aged 74 years. He was a man of character—set in his ways, with positive likes and dislikes, bluntly outspoken, yet was universally esteemed and admired.

Charles P. Babcock was a bustling, busy man for many years, sometimes in trade, sometimes in manufacturing, sometimes as landlord entertaining guests, and always one whose ambitions were greater than his physical strength. He removed to Washington, D. C., in 1867.

Leonard Snyder was born at Rensselaerville, Albany County, New York. At the age of twelve he removed with his parents to Schoharie, where he received an excellent common school education for those days. He served his apprenticeship as a mason and plasterer, and became an expert. He came to Ann Arbor about 1838, and in September, 1842, came to Grand Rapids. He was elected constable of the then village of Grand Rapids, two terms, and served as deputy sheriff under DeWitt Shoemaker in 1847-48. He was elected, by large Democratic majorities, as sheriff for two terms, serving from 1851 to 1855. He was then elected and served as city marshal three terms, 1861-62-63. During the latter part of his life he lived retired, and he died May 16, 1895, at the age of 90 years.

Sluman S. Bailey came into Paris township in 1846, and lived on a farm there fourteen years, when he moved into Grand Rapids. He was born at Somerset, Niagara County, New York, Dec. 14, 1821. Farming was his favorite occupation, but he was a busy man in public as well as private life, in various township offices, as sheriff, and fifteen years as collector of internal revenue.

Isaac F. Lamoreaux was born in Canada, near Toronto, April 8, 1851. In 1852 the family moved to Cuyahoga County, Ohio, and settled in Byron, Kent County, in 1854. The future sheriff was sent to school in Algoma and finished his education in Grand Rapids. His father was engaged in the lumber trade and the boy was thus employed until 18 years old, after which he entered a store in Grand Rapids as clerk. In 1872 he was appointed deputy sheriff under Jesse F. Wyckoff, serving for about one year, and then he engaged as clerk in the grocery trade two years. In 1874, he was appointed collector for the old Sixth ward, and in 1875 he was made turnkey at the jail, under Isaac Haynes. In January, 1877, he was appointed deputy, under Sheriff Peck, and served throughout the term. In the Spring of 1877 he was elected alderman of the old Sixth ward, which he represented in the city council two years. In November, 1880, he was elected sheriff of Kent County, serving one term, and in 1892 he

was again elected to that position. Afterward he served as city clerk of Grand Rapids, and he remained here until about 1910, when he removed to Salt Lake City, Utah.

Leman H. Chapman was born in Cannon township, Kent County, June 5, 1849. He attended the public schools at Cannonsburg and also studied at G. H. Ranney's select school. Following his graduation he entered upon the profession of school teaching, which he followed for three years. He then became associated with George S. Frost & Company, of Detroit, dealers in pine timber land, and immediately went into the forest, locating timber land. Ten years later he formed a partnership with his father and brother and continued in the same line of business. After several years spent in farming he took charge of the land office in the upper peninsula for the Detroit & Mackinac Railroad Company, and from 1881 to 1890 he had charge of the affairs of the Fuller & Rice Lumber Company, in that district. In 1900 he made the race for sheriff of Kent County and was elected, being re-elected two years later. Following his retirement from the office of sheriff he engaged in the livery business in Grand Rapids and so continued until his death, May 23, 1912.

#### MEMBERS OF THE BAR.

The bar of 1836 included Julius C. Abel, George Martin, A. D. Rathbone, C. P. Calkins, S. M. Johnson, and Hiram Osgood. Martin had but just attained his majority, and the others were probably not much over the age of thirty. Calkins, born in Vermont, received an academic education and ranked high as a member of the bar. Osgood and Rathbone are both reputed to have been men of superior ability and professional attainments. Rathbone ranked high among his fellows, and for a brief time was associated in practice with John Ball as senior partner. His death, which occurred in April, 1856, was a serious loss to the community. Osgood was appointed the first district attorney of the county, in 1837, by Governor Mason, and was a prominent citizen and leading lawyer until he died, in the early part of 1843.

The ranks of the profession were further increased in 1843 by the admission to the bar of Solomon L. Withey, John T. Holmes, and Sylvester Granger, who were all admitted to practice on the same day; and they had been preceded, in 1842, by Thomas B. Church, who had located for the practice of his profession in the embryo Valley City. Mr. Church at once took a prominent position in the ranks of the legal fraternity, and he maintained that position until his death. "Mr. Church was a genius—a man of marked mental powers; he wrote much for the newspapers and had great literary ability; he was an orator whose eloquence often astounded and delighted his audience, both upon the stump and in the court room. He was not always eloquent in trying cases, however; sometimes the fire did not flash, but let his powers be aroused by a just cause weighing in the balance, an act of injustice, the obstinacy of a witness, or the force of a worthy opponent, and he would suddenly call together the vast stores of his memory and overwhelm court and jury with his oratory. It did not need a great case or a large audience to arouse his talents. In justice court he sometimes overwhelmed court and jury with his elo-



quence, if he detected injustice or oppression in an adversary. He was appointed prosecuting attorney soon after coming to Grand Rapids and conducted the first murder trial in the county. The memory of no member of the Kent County bar is surrounded with more romance and regard than is that of Tom Church." Such was the opinion of Thomas B. Church, one of Grand Rapids' best and most honored lawyers, given by one who knew him well.

Sylvester Granger came to Grand Rapids in 1836, and the following year was elected clerk of Grand Rapids township. In 1838 he helped build the first court house in Grand Rapids, and in its days he wrote much for the Grand Rapids Enquirer. On May 17, 1843, with John T. Holmes and Solomon L. Withey, he was admitted to the bar, as heretofore mentioned, and the next year he was elected justice of the peace. Those already mentioned were the men who practically constituted the bar of Grand Rapids during the first ten years of its history. A few others came, but their stay was short or their professional rank and influence unimportant.

In 1847 Lucius Patterson located in Grand Rapids, and for near a quarter of a century he was a man of mark among the members of the bar in Kent County. He was born at Constantia, Oswego County, New York, Nov. 29, 1814, and was reared on a farm. He began the study of law in 1836, came to Michigan in 1844, and settled in Otisco as a farmer. He was admitted to the bar in Grand Rapids in 1846, and in the following year moved into the village. He built a neat stone house for a residence on Scribner avenue, near Fifth street, about 1850, and lived there some twenty years. He was an able lawyer—not learned, but acute, quick, clear and concise in statement and argument, fertile in expedients in behalf of his clients, impressive and sometimes eloquent in speech, a man of much reading and varied information, and more than moderately successful in winning cases. He had a strong will and positive likes and dislikes, but was genial and generous in disposition. He died in Grand Rapids, March 23, 1871.

Ebenezer S. Eggleston and James H. McKee were added to the list of members of the Grand Rapids bar in 1852. The former is given personal mention on another page. Mr. McKee was born in West Arlington, Vt., June 19, 1823. He received his early education in the academy at Bennington, Vt., and later entered Yale, being graduated in the classic department of that institution in 1844. He later took up the study of law in New York City. In 1849 he moved to Michigan, locating at Laingsburg, and in 1852 came to Grand Rapids, where he began the practice of law. At one time John Ball was his partner in the law firm of Ball & McKee. Mr. McKee died Aug. 31, 1908.

Christopher W. Leffingwell was born in Albany, N. Y., Sept. 9, 1808. In his early manhood he taught school and studied law in Ohio. Having been admitted to the bar he came to Michigan in 1836 and settled in DeWitt, Clinton County. In 1854 he came to Grand Rapids and practiced law until the days of the Civil War. At one time he was a partner of Lucius Patterson, and in 1856 he was chosen city attorney. In 1861 he was elected justice of the peace. Although advanced in years, before the Civil War he took an interest in military



affairs of the local militia, and after the war was well under way he enlisted and saw active service. After the close of the war he remained in the Government service, looking after Government property in the southern States. In 1866 he returned to Grand Rapids and settled on a farm in Grand Rapids township, where he remained until 1871, when he removed to Illinois and lived at Rock Island and Hovey until his death, July 17, 1871.

John W. Champlin was born in Kingston, Ulster County, New York, Feb. 17, 1831. He lived at home and worked on his father's farm until he was twenty-one years of age, a period in life which meant much more seventy years ago than it does at present. His early education was received in the common schools and academy at Harpersfield, and the academies at Stamsford and Rheinbeck. After attaining his majority he pursued a course of civil engineering at Delaware Institute as a preparation of what he then conceived would be his life work. For about two years he engaged in the practical work of civil engineering in New York State. In 1854, he decided the profession of law would be more congenial and at once set about the business of qualifying himself for entering it. He came to Michigan and took up the study in the office of his elder brother, Stephen G., who had settled in Grand Rapids as a practicing lawyer in the previous year. In 1855 he was admitted to the bar after an examination before Judge George Martin, who was afterward chief justice of the Supreme Court. Without delay he entered into the practice at Grand Rapids, which was continuous and constantly expanding for more than fifty years, interrupted only by judicial service. In 1856 he prepared a revision of the charter of Grand Rapids, which evidenced his ability and understanding of the law to an extent remarkable for one who had engaged in the practice less than a year. He served a term as city recorder of Grand Rapids and a term as mayor of the city. In 1883 he was nominated by the Democratic party and elected justice of the Supreme Court, entering upon his judicial functions Jan. 1, 1884. For eight years he was one of the hard-working, painstaking and clear-headed judges of the court. At the end of his term he resumed private practice with the added visage which always attends honorable and praiseworthy service on the appellate bench. He was one of the lecturers in the law department of the University of Michigan, holding the place until Oct. 1, 1896, when he resigned after a service of five years. Judge Champlin died July 24, 1901.

George H. White and George Gray were added to the list of Grand Rapids attorneys in 1856. The former has already been given mention in the list of circuit court commissioners. George Gray was born in County Tyrone, Ireland, June 20, 1824. In early life he was a civil engineer and took high rank in his chosen profession, having received a collegiate education. He came to Grand Rapids in 1855 and on Dec. 22, 1856, was admitted to the bar of Kent County before Judge Martin; and at once he became a partner of Solomon L. Withey, which partnership continued until 1862. He entered the military service and became colonel of the Sixth Michigan cavalry, seeing active service and winning distinction in the Gettysburg campaign of 1863. After the war he resumed the practice of his profession at



Grand Rapids and continued until 1870, when he entered the service of the Northern Pacific Railroad and removed to New York City. He afterward became general counsel for the company and remained as such until failing health compelled him to relinquish the duties. He then removed to Orange, N. J., where he died a number of years ago.

William E. Grove was born near Geneva, Ontario County, New York, Nov. 27, 1833. His early life was spent on the farm, where he developed the sturdy physique which stood him so well in hand in the later years of his life. After attending Swift's Academy and the Union High School, he entered Hobart College, in Geneva, in which school he was graduated with high honors. With his collegiate training as a foundation for his future life, he left the East and came to Grand Rapids, where he took up the study of law, in 1857, in the office of J. T. Holmes, afterward judge of the Superior Court. Soon after his admission to the bar, in March, 1859, the ambitious young man became a candidate for justice of the peace and was elected. Seven years later the call of the West again urged him to move onward, and he went to Neosha Falls, Kan. He was elected prosecuting attorney of Woodson County, in that State, and he also served as city attorney at Neosha Falls. After five years of Kansas life he decided that Michigan was the place for him, and he returned to Grand Rapids. In his legal career, before he was appointed to the Seventeenth judicial circuit, to succeed Judge Montgomery, he was associated with George W. Thompson, J. M. Harris, and J. S. Lawrence. At the next regular election after his appointment to the bench he was easily elected for the balance of the term. In 1893 he was the choice of all parties for the judgeship, although he was nominated by the Republicans. He retired from the bench Dec. 31, 1900. After leaving the bench he formed a law partnership with Elvert M. Davis, which continued for two years, and in 1904 he formed a partnership with John S. McDonald, now judge of the Circuit Court, which continued for five years. He retired from active practice in 1915, and he died at his residence in Grand Rapids, June 3, 1918.

James A. Rogers was born in Northern Vermont, June 30, 1834. When he was a small boy his people moved to Michigan, but when he was sixteen years old he returned to Springfield, Mass., where he was graduated in the high school and learned pharmacy. From 1857 until 1859 he was in the drug business at Indianapolis, Ind. Then he studied law for a time and came to Grand Rapids, about 1860, and soon afterward was admitted to the bar. He was a partner with James Miller and afterward was a member of the firm of Rogers, Clay & Sliter. He died May 25, 1895.

G. Chase Godwin was a native-born Kent County lawyer, having first seen the light of day in Wyoming township, April 18, 1840. He was educated in the common schools of the county and the city schools of Grand Rapids. In 1862 he began the study of law in the offices of Holmes & Champlin, and was admitted in 1864. He soon afterward commenced business for himself and was a practicing lawyer in Grand Rapids until his death, Feb. 26, 1891. He was judge of the Recorder's Court from 1871 to 1875 and was city attorney in 1879. In August, 1886, he was appointed United States District Attorney for the Western District of Michigan by President Cleveland, and held the office until 1890.



Isaac H. Parrish was born in Ontario County, New York, April 2, 1826, and came to Oakland County, Michigan, in 1834. His youth was spent in farm life, the family lived in a log house in the woods, and all his school education was acquired in a log school house in Farmington. After he was twenty years of age he read law, and was admitted to the bar in 1848. Then for twelve years he practiced successively at Pontiac, in Wisconsin, and at Chicago. He came to Grand Rapids in 1861. In 1865 he was appointed clerk of the United States Circuit and District courts here, and held that position ten years, after which he returned to law practice. In 1881 he was elected judge of the Superior Court, and ably filled the position during the term of six years. Some two years later he removed from the city.

Augustus D. Griswold was born in Oneida County, New York, Oct. 11, 1823. He came from Rome, N. Y., to Michigan, in 1856, and soon thereafter located in Grand Rapids. He was elected to the Legislature in 1862, was re-elected in 1864, and served as speaker pro tem. of the house during the session of 1865, and also as chairman of the judiciary committee. He served as United States District Attorney from 1865 to 1869, except six months when he was removed by President Johnson, and afterward was reappointed by the same authority. He left Grand Rapids about 1875 and removed to Ovid, Clinton County, where he continued the active practice of his profession.

James Blair and E. C. Watkins began the practice of law in Grand Rapids in 1865. The former was born on the shores of Lake George, in Putnam County, New York, Jan. 2, 1830. When he was twelve years of age his father's family moved to Michigan and stopped for a few months in Jackson County, and then located in Walker township, Kent County, where James Blair lived on a farm until he was eighteen years old. He then came to Grand Rapids and this place was his home until his death, Dec. 18, 1892. His education was obtained in the common schools. After coming to Grand Rapids he was in business with Porter & Roberts and C. C. Comstock for many years. In 1856 he was city clerk. Soon after Colonel Gray returned from the war, Mr. Blair commenced to study law with him and was admitted to the bar in 1865. He was employed by Colonel Gray until the latter left the city and then succeeded to his business. In 1871 he formed a partnership with Lyman D. Norris, under the firm name of Norris & Blair, which afterward became Norris, Blair & Kingsley, and then Blair, Stone & Kingsley, followed by Blair, Eggleston, Kingsley & Kleinhans, and then Blair, Kingsley & Kleinhans, which continued for many years, until Mr. Blair's death. Mr. Blair was a member of the Grand Rapids Board of Education for eleven years and served as its president four terms. He was appointed by Governor Begole a member of the Board of Trustees for the Industrial School for Boys and served one term. In 1885 he was appointed postmaster at Grand Rapids by President Cleveland and held the office five years.

Moses Taggart was born in Niagara County, New York. He studied law while a young man and was graduated at the University of Michigan in 1868. He began practicing his profession under his uncle, Moses Taggart, in Buffalo, but later went to Cedar Springs, Iowa, where he remained six months before locating in Grand Rap-



ids in 1869. In 1884 he was elected to the position of attorney-general of the State of Michigan. His fame as a lawyer of note spread, and he was appointed to the office of city attorney of Grand Rapids in 1901. In 1902 he was elected to that position and held it for twelve consecutive years. He died at his summer home at White Lake, Aug. 20, 1914.

Mark M. Powers was born in Cortland County, New York, in 1845. He first came to Grand Rapids in 1868; then took a course of law at the Michigan University, after which, in 1869, he returned here and engaged in the practice of his profession. He continued so engaged until his death, May 15, 1906.

Willard A. Kingsley was born Dec. 25, 1845, at Huntington, Lorain County, Ohio. He was graduated in the literary department of the University of Michigan, in the class of 1868. He pursued his legal studies at the University of Michigan and at Harvard, and was admitted at Detroit before the Michigan Supreme Court in 1870. Locating in Grand Rapids, he soon became a member of the law firm of Norris, Blair & Kingsley, which afterward became Blair, Eggleston, Kingsley & Kleinhans, then Blair, Kingsley & Kleinhans, and later Kingsley & Wicks. The last named partnership existed until his death, which occurred in a hospital at Waukesha, Wis., Jan. 10, 1913.

Emil A. Dapper was born in the city of New York, Feb. 21, 1844, and was admitted to the bar in that city. At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted as a private in Company B, Fifty-ninth New York infantry, and served with distinction throughout the war. At its close he was mustered out as captain. He then was managing clerk in a law office in New York City from 1865 to 1869, when he came to Grand Rapids. In 1871 he was admitted to the bar here, and continued in practice until his death, which occurred Nov. 12, 1906.

Lyman D. Norris was born in Genesee County, New York, May 4, 1823, and died at his home in Grand Rapids, Jan. 6, 1894. His parents migrated to Michigan in 1827, and settled where now is the city of Ypsilanti. In boyhood, Lyman D. attended the schools of Ypsilanti, but was prepared for college in a Presbyterian school at Marshall, which was called "Michigan College." He entered the first class of the University of Michigan when it opened, in 1841. He spent his senior year at Yale, in which he was graduated in 1845. He at once returned to Ann Arbor and was also graduated the same year in the University of Michigan with the class in which he had entered that institution. After his double graduation he studied law in the office of Alexander D. Fraser, of Detroit, and was admitted in 1847. In 1848 he went to St. Louis, Mo., to practice law. Two years later he visited Europe on legal business and attended a course of lectures on civil law at Heidelberg. While in St. Louis Mr. Norris was also editor and part owner of the St. Louis Times, which was then the leading Democratic newspaper of the Mississippi Valley. In 1854 he returned to Ypsilanti, where for seventeen years he practiced law and managed the business of his father's estate. In 1871 he came to Grand Rapids and formed a partnership with James Blair, under the firm name of Norris & Blair, the firm afterward becoming Norris, Blair & Kingsley, and then Norris, Blair and Stone. In 1875 he



formed a partnership with Edwin F. Uhl, which continued until 1887, when the firm of Norris & Norris was formed, and this continued until the death of L. D. Norris. In 1867 Mr. Norris was a member of the State Constitutional Convention, and in 1869 he was elected State Senator. In 1875 he was the nominee of his party for justice of the Supreme Court. In 1883 he was appointed a regent of the University of Michigan.

David D. Hughes was born at Camillus, Onondaga County, New York, Feb. 1, 1823. He secured his academic education at Syracuse and Canandaigua. The family came to Michigan in 1840 and settled on a farm in Eaton County, where his mother died within a year. Mr. Hughes was thrown upon his own resources at the age of seventeen and in 1842 went to Charlotte, where he remained a year, and while there held the position of deputy county clerk, deputy county surveyor, and under sheriff. In 1843 he entered the law office of M. S. Brackett, maintaining himself in the meantime by teaching a select school for young ladies. In 1844 he went to Marshall, where he entered the office of Gibbs & Bradley, a leading law firm of Southern Michigan. Here he remained until his admission to the Calhoun County bar on examination in August, 1846. Beginning in 1846 and continuing for several years, Mr. Hughes was the editor of the Democratic Expounder, a weekly newspaper published in Marshall. Isaac E. Crary, the first member of Congress from Michigan, and Abner Pratt, as partners under the firm name of Pratt & Crary, had built up a large business in Marshall, and by the election of Mr. Pratt as justice of the Supreme Court in 1850, the firm was dissolved and Mr. Hughes became Mr. Crary's partner. In 1854, Mr. Crary died, and in 1855 Mr. Hughes formed a partnership with Justin D. Woolley, and from that time his business as a trial lawyer continued to increase until he was compelled to abandon his local practice and devote his time exclusively to the trial of important cases throughout the State, and thenceforth until the close of his life work he was perhaps the leading trial lawyer in Michigan, both in civil and criminal practice. In 1871 he was appointed general counsel of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company and the Continental Improvement Company. This placed in his hands the law business of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and of the Pennsylvania Company in Michigan, and to facilitate his work he moved to Grand Rapids, where the general offices of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company were situated. Shortly before this he had formed a partnership with T. J. O'Brien, under the firm name of Hughes & O'Brien. Their business grew until it was necessary to add another member to the firm, and M. J. Smiley was admitted to partnership, the firm becoming Hughes, O'Brien & Smiley, which was dissolved by the death of Mr. Hughes, June 12, 1883. In politics Mr. Hughes was a Democrat, but never figured as a politician, although he served as mayor of Marshall for two terms and was for years a member of the Board of Education. While his party was in the minority in the State he decided to run for office and became a candidate for Congress and afterward for justice of the Supreme Court, but was defeated with his party.

Peter O. Voorheis was born in Oakland County. He was graduated in the literary department of the Michigan University in 1870,



and in the law department in 1872. He came at once to Grand Rapids and practiced law until his death, Sept. 17, 1890.

James E. McBride was born at Woodville, Sandusky County, Ohio, Nov. 16, 1847. He graduated in the scientific department of Notre Dame in June, 1868, and in the Michigan University in 1870. He was admitted to the bar in Toledo, Ohio, in April, 1870, and in June, 1872, came to Grand Rapids, where he continued in active practice until his death, Dec. 8, 1912. He was the first police magistrate in Grand Rapids, serving from 1874 until 1878.

Mitchell J. Smiley was born in South Avon, N. Y., May 2, 1841, and ten years later moved with his parents to Van Buren County, Michigan, where they settled on a farm. At the age of seventeen, he became a student at Kalamazoo College, paying his expenses by teaching school a part of each year. In 1860 he began the study of law under the direction of N. A. Balch, of Kalamazoo, who was then at the height of a successful career. Two years later Mr. Smiley was admitted to the bar and at once entered into partnership with his preceptor, which association was continued for ten years, when the firm dissolved and Mr. Smiley entered into co-partnership with Messrs. Hughes and O'Brien, of Grand Rapids, where he removed in 1872. Upon the death of Mr. Hughes in 1883, Mr. Smiley organized the firm of Smiley & Earle, which was dissolved in 1891 by the death of Mr. Earle. He next formed a partnership with William Alden Smith and Frederick W. Stevens, which continued until February, 1895, when this also was dissolved and Mr. Smiley removed to Chicago on account of the greater facilities afforded there for the executive management of corporations in another State.

John C. Fitzgerald was born in Berlin, Huron County, Ohio, in 1835, and in his infancy was brought by his parents to Springfield, Jackson County, Michigan. His early days were spent on the farm, with the privilege of attending the district schools during a few months of the year. His early education was secured with money earned by teaching school, and this enabled him to attend the Albion College. Upon leaving school, he went to Jackson and entered the office of Austin Blair, who afterward was Michigan's war Governor. He was admitted to the bar in 1858, after which he continued to practice in Jackson until 1860, when he removed to Marshall, Calhoun County. He remained there until 1873, holding the office of prosecuting attorney from 1861 to 1865. In 1873 he entered into partnership with Champlin & Butterfield, of Grand Rapids, and this association continued for several years. Mr. Fitzgerald practiced in Grand Rapids until 1905, when he removed to California.

William D. Fuller was born in Chardon, Geauga County, Ohio, Sept. 3, 1840, and at the age of five years came to Grand Rapids with his parents. In 1858 the father opened a general store and in this business the son assisted until 1861, when he went to Hiram, Ohio, to attend school. Returning to Michigan in 1863, he engaged in business at Berlin. This proved an unfortunate venture and a short time afterward he took up the study of the law, reading in the office of his father-in-law, Col. John H. Standish, at Newaygo. He was admitted to the Newaygo County bar in 1864, at the age of twenty-four years, and was elected prosecuting attorney in 1868, serving four



years. He was again elected to the same office in 1882. He held a number of other State and county offices and then, in 1888, again moved to Grand Rapids, where he resided until his death, March 20, 1908. For a period of ten years he was reporter for the State Supreme Court.

Henry J. Felker was born in Park township, St. Joseph county, Jan. 22, 1847. He was educated in the common schools of St. Joseph County and in the Three Rivers High School, and graduated at Albion College in 1872. Soon afterward he began to study law at Charlotte, Mich., in the office of Philip T. VanZile, and he was admitted in April, 1874. He commenced practice in Marcellus, Cass County, but soon removed to Grand Rapids and for a time was clerk in the office of Godwin & Holmes. In 1876 he formed a partnership with A. J. Reeves, which continued until 1883, when he formed a partnership with E. A. Maher, which continued until 1890. In 1894 Mr. Felker was appointed city attorney and held the position five years. Soon after leaving the city attorney's office his health began to fail and he died Nov. 26, 1902. He was a member of the Grand Rapids School Board fifteen years, for three of which he was its president.

Horton H. Drury was born in Vermont, but came west when a youth. He enlisted in the Federal army at the time of the Civil War, and at the engagement at Perryville, Ky., was shot in the left shoulder and never recovered the use of the shoulder joint. After his recovery and discharge he entered the University of Michigan, in which he was graduated as a bachelor of arts and later received a diploma from the same institution as a bachelor of laws. He started the practice of his profession at Escanaba and came to Grand Rapids in 1875. He was successively a member of the legal firms of Churchill & Drury, Drury & Maher, and Drury & Wolcott. In the early eighties he was twice elected a member of the Board of Education. He died March 18, 1909.

Henry B. Fallass was born at Fallassburg, a village near Lowell, this county, his parents having been among the earliest pioneers of that region. In the late '60s he came to Grand Rapids, where he taught school and was for a time county superintendent of schools. He then began the study of law and entered the University of Michigan, in the law department of which he was graduated in 1875. With Clark H. Gleason, a fellow-graduate, he then opened a law office in the Powers Theatre Building, and that association existed two years, after which Mr. Fallass practiced alone. He died May 16, 1907.

John W. Holcomb was born in New York State. He went to Canada when very young, and after finishing common school graduated at the Toronto University with the degrees of A. B., A. M., and LL. B., in 1862. He went to New York in 1863, and practiced there until 1876, when he came to Grand Rapids. He then continued to practice here until his death, which occurred about 1908.

Frank G. Holmes was born in Albion, Calhoun County, Michigan, Nov. 18, 1842. He was educated in the common schools until 1855, and then attended the Wesleyan Seminary, now Albion College, until 1860. After a course in the University of Michigan law department, he was admitted to the bar in 1866, and commenced practice at Marshall, Mich., continuing there until 1876. He was assistant



United States attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan in 1872. He removed to Grand Rapids in 1876, and became deputy prosecuting attorney of Kent County, following Judge J. W. Stuart, and afterwards practiced here as a member of the firm of Holmes & Holmes.

Edwin F. Uhl was born in the town of Rush, near Avon Springs, in the State of New York, Aug. 14, 1841. His parents moved to Michigan in 1844. When about thirteen years of age, Edwin entered the Ypsilanti Seminary, and was not quite seventeen when he completed his preparatory course. In 1858 he entered Michigan University in the classical course, and there his career was marked by the same qualities as his preparatory course. He gained an enviable standing in college by virtue of conscientious, hard work, and was graduated in the class of 1862, with a most honorable record. Immediately he took up the study of law in the office of Norris & Ninde, at Ypsilanti, and in January, 1864, was admitted to the bar of Michigan before the Supreme Court of the State. In 1866 he formed a partnership with Hon. Lyman D. Norris, then of Ypsilanti, under the style of Norris & Uhl, and this relation continued until 1871, when Mr. Norris removed to Grand Rapids. In 1871 and 1872 Mr. Uhl was prosecuting attorney for the county of Washtenaw, and in 1873 he became associated with Albert Crane, under the firm name of Uhl & Crane. This partnership continued until 1876, when Mr. Uhl came to Grand Rapids and renewed his partnership with Mr. Norris, which business association continued uninterrupted for a period of eleven years. At the beginning of 1887, Mr. Norris retired from the firm and Mr. Uhl once more became associated with Albert Crane, who had then also removed to Grand Rapids. Their partnership continued until Mr. Uhl accepted the position of Assistant Secretary of State of the United States, in October, 1893. In 1890 he was elected mayor of Grand Rapids, and in 1891 was elected for a second term by a large majority. He left the office of mayor with the universal respect of his fellow-townsmen; and in the Democratic State convention of 1894 he received the unanimous nomination of his party for United States Senator, but as his party was in the minority in the Legislature, the nomination proved only an honorable endorsement by his party friends. Upon the resignation of Mr. Quincy as Assistant Secretary of State, in October, 1893, that position was tendered Mr. Uhl by the President, and accepted. As soon as he could arrange his business and private affairs, he took up his residence at Washington and entered upon the discharge of the duties of the position. In February, 1896, the President appointed Mr. Uhl American ambassador plenipotentiary to the German Empire, and in the following month he proceeded to Berlin and entered upon his duties, which continued until the Spring of 1897, when the Hon. Andrew D. White, who had been one of Mr. Uhl's teachers, was commissioned to succeed him. Returning to the United States in the Summer of 1897, Mr. Uhl resumed the practice of law, in Chicago and in Grand Rapids, but in 1899 he settled down for a quiet life. His health began to decline, and on Friday, May 17, 1901, he peacefully passed over to the majority.

Wesley W. Hyde was born in McComb County, Michigan, in 1853. With a common school education received at Rockford, where



he also studied law, he came to Grand Rapids in 1875 and entered the county clerk's office. He was appointed county clerk in 1876, and was admitted to the bar in 1877. He took an active interest in public affairs, serving as assistant United States attorney from 1880 to 1885. He was a member of the State board of law examiners for fourteen years. For five years he was a member of the commission on uniform legislation for Michigan. He was in ill health for several years prior to his death, which occurred Dec. 18, 1917.

Robert M. Montgomery was born in Eaton Rapids, Mich., May 12, 1849. Until eighteen years of age he attended the public schools of his native town, although he had begun teaching during the winter terms, at the early age of sixteen and continued until twenty-one. He began the study of law in the office of F. J. Russell when nineteen years of age and remained with him until he attained his majority. He was admitted to the bar in July, 1870, and immediately entered upon the practice of law in Pentwater, where he remained until 1877. He then removed to Grand Rapids and resided there until the law required his residence in Lansing as a justice of the Supreme Court. While a resident of Pentwater he was prosecuting attorney of Oceana County for two terms. After his removal to Grand Rapids he was appointed assistant United States district attorney, a position which he held until September, 1881. In the April election of that year he was chosen judge of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit and was afterward re-elected for a second term. In 1888 he resigned the judicial office and resumed private practice in Grand Rapids as a member of the firm of Montgomery & Bundy. He continued as a member of that firm until his assumption of the duties of judge of the Supreme Court, to which he was elected in the Spring of 1891. He was re-elected in 1901, and occupied the position until April, 1910, when he resigned to accept the appointment as presiding judge of the Federal Court of Customs Appeals, at Washington, D. C. He still occupies that position.

Leonard A. Ward was born in Ada township, Kent County, May 13, 1854. He was educated in the common and village schools of Kent County and taught country schools for a few terms, during which time he read law. He also studied in the office of Judge Parrish and was admitted in 1878. Almost immediately he commenced practice for himself. Early in 1884 he formed a partnership with his brother, Charles E. Ward, under the firm name of Ward & Ward, and this association continued until the death of Leonard A. Ward, Sept. 8, 1892.

Charles Chandler was born at Clinton, Mich., April 16, 1838. He worked on the farm, attending the common schools until eighteen years of age, and in the fall of 1859 entered the sophomore class at the University of Michigan, in which he graduated, in 1862, with the degree of A. B., and subsequently received from the same institution the degree of A. M. After teaching one year he was appointed superintendent of the union schools at Grand Haven, Mich., where he taught two years. In 1865 he resigned this position to accept a similar one at Hastings, where he remained one year and then became principal of the grammar schools at Grand Rapids in 1866. He held this position until 1877, when he resigned to take up the study of law



at Ann Arbor University, in which he graduated with the degree of LL. B., in 1879. He then entered the law office of J. C. Fitzgerald, at Grand Rapids, where he remained until 1893, when he opened an office and started in business for himself. Mr. Chandler's death occurred very suddenly Jan. 9, 1905, while questioning a witness in the probate court, his relatives being unable to reach his side before he had expired.

McGeorge Bundy was born at Oxford, N. Y., in 1855, and his early schooling was obtained in the public schools of that place. After finishing his high school education he entered Amherst College, in which he was graduated, in 1876. Then followed a period of study in his father's office. Upon the completion of his studies with his father McGeorge was admitted to practice at Albany, in 1878. He was readmitted to practice at Saratoga, in 1879. He next entered the service of the Federal government, going to Havre, France, as a member of the diplomatic corps. He spent one year in France and then resigned to enter the practice of law in his own country. He came directly from his French post to Grand Rapids, arriving in this city and opening a law office with Clark H. Gleason as partner, in 1881. This partnership continued until 1888, when it was dissolved, and he followed his profession without a partner until the following year, when he formed a partnership with Judge R. M. Montgomery, when the latter retired from the local circuit bench. This firm lasted until Judge Montgomery assumed the Supreme bench, Jan. 1, 1892. Immediately Mr. Bundy entered a partnership with Philip H. Travis, and later Benjamin P. Merrick was taken into the firm, which continued under the name of Bundy, Travis & Merrick until Mr. Bundy's death, Nov. 7, 1911.

Maurice M. Houseman was born in Grand Rapids, Nov. 17, 1859, and had resided here almost continuously to the time of his death, June 23, 1903. He was educated in the public schools of this city and was graduated in the high school with the class of 1877. He took the literary and law course at the University of Michigan, graduating with the class of 1881. He immediately entered upon the practice of his profession here, which profession he followed to the time of his final illness, though being identified with other business enterprises. As soon as he was admitted he was appointed assistant prosecuting attorney. He was at different times a member of the law firms of Burlingame & Houseman and Rutherford & Houseman. He moved to Chicago, in March, 1896, and practiced there for a number of years, returning to this city in the Spring of 1902.

Arthur R. Rood was born in Lapeer county, Michigan, Sept. 27, 1858. He worked on a farm and attended district school until thirteen years old, when he entered the Lapeer High School, in which he was graduated in 1876. The same year he entered the literary department of the Michigan university and was graduated in 1881. In his college course he spent one year in teaching. The year after graduation he was superintendent of schools at Saline, and at the same time studied law. He was admitted to the bar in the Fall of 1882 and immediately entered the law department of the university, in which he was graduated the next year. He located in Grand Rapids and for something more than a year acted as clerk in various



law offices and then commenced business for himself. He practiced alone until 1893, when he formed a partnership with Will E. Ryan, which continued until 1897, when Mr. Ryan was succeeded by A. C. Hindman. In the Spring of 1898 Mr. Rood was nominated for mayor, but was defeated. In 1902 he was again nominated and conditions were such that his election was assured, but the day he was nominated he was taken ill and three days before election he died.

Niram A. Fletcher was born at Oakland, Brant county, Ontario, Feb. 13, 1850. In 1868 and 1869 he taught school near Hamilton, Ontario. He came to Grand Rapids, in 1870, and in 1871 he began the study of law with Taggart & Simonds. He was admitted to the bar in 1873 and continued in the practice until his death, Aug. 15, 1899, at that time being the head of the firm of Fletcher & Wanty. He was elected to the legislature, in 1882, but was not a candidate for re-election, and this was the only political office he ever sought. For twenty years he held a prominent place in legal, banking, and social circles in the city of Grand Rapids.

Charles M. Wilson was born in Ionia, Oct. 10, 1858, and came to Grand Rapids in 1883, following his graduation in the law department of the University of Michigan. A life-long Democrat, he was honored twice by his party as its nominee for a place on the Michigan Supreme Court bench. In April, 1917, he led his ticket by several thousand votes, running far ahead of his opponent in his home city, but losing out in the State. For two years he served as a member of the Board of State Bar Examiners, under an appointment by former Governor Ferris. Mr. Wilson died, June 20, 1917.

Nathan P. Allen was born in New York State, but removed with his parents to Macomb county, Michigan, when a child. At the age of eighteen he tired of the life on the farm with his parents and came to Grand Rapids, working in one of its pioneer saw-mills. Later he removed to Fenton, where he took up the carpenter's trade, becoming a skilled artisan, and later started a store. But some time afterward he returned to Grand Rapids and as a contractor built some of the city's first big buildings. Having studied law, in 1873 he abandoned his trade and was admitted to the bar. Soon after taking up the practice of his profession he entered the law firm of Gray, Kutts & Hyde. Mr. Kutts was later elected prosecuting attorney on the Greenback ticket, and Mr. Allen and George W. Thompson were appointed assistants and did the brunt of the work. Mr. Allen practiced for some time in Chicago and there laid the foundation of his reputation as a criminal lawyer. He died, Aug. 19, 1914.

William H. Haggerty was born in Clay Banks, Oceana county, Michigan, March 19, 1854. He worked on the farm and attended and taught country schools until he reached his majority, when he entered and worked his way through Hillsdale College, in which he was graduated in 1881. He then taught school in academies in New York and in the high schools of Oceana county until 1885, during which time he read law. In 1885 he entered the law department of the State university and was graduated in 1886, when he at once located in Grand Rapids, where he lived and practiced law until his death, March 30, 1904. In 1888 he formed a partnership with Dwight Goss, which continued until 1892. In 1891 he was elected judge of the police



court to fill a vacancy caused by the death of Judge Holmes, and at the close of his term he was re-elected. In 1896 he resumed private practice; but in 1900 he was again elected judge of the police court and held the office at the time of his death.

Allen C. Adsit was born in Rutland, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1837. He was brought up on the farm and secured his early education in the district school. He later attended Fairfield Seminary, at Fairfield, N. Y., and the Jefferson County Institute at Watertown, N. Y. He studied law at Watertown during the years 1857 to 1859 and commenced practicing the profession in Adams, N. Y., in 1860. In 1861, when the war for the Union came on, he enlisted as a private in the Forty-fourth New York infantry. He served in the Army of the Potomac and was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant. At the close of the war he came to Michigan and settled in Spring Lake, Ottawa county. In the time of his residence there he served as supervisor of the village and was elected and served as a representative in the State legislature for the term 1871-72. In 1874 he was elected prosecuting attorney for Ottawa county and held that office until 1877, when he moved to Grand Rapids. In 1886 he was appointed assistant United States attorney for the Western District of Michigan and held that position until 1890. In 1887 he was a candidate for circuit judge on the Democratic ticket. For the unexpired term of Marsden C. Burch, Mr. Adsit was elected to the bench of the Seventeenth judicial circuit, in 1890. His record on the bench was approved and in 1893 he was re-elected for a term of six years. He retired from the bench, Jan. 1, 1900, and then continued in the practice until his death, Jan. 3, 1912.

Hiram N. Averill was born at Rochester, N. Y., Oct. 17, 1844. He came to Allegan, Mich., in 1852, read law, and was admitted to the bar in 1865. He came to Grand Rapids in 1888, and practiced here until about 1911.

John H. Tatem was born in Rhode Island, in 1833. He was educated in the common schools of that State and later entered the law department of the University of Michigan, in which he graduated in 1864. He was admitted to the bar and commenced practice at Adrian, Mich., where he lived for the next seven years. He then moved to Greenville, Mich., where he lived for the next seventeen years, at the same time practicing in the Grand Rapids courts, and finally he moved here in 1888, residing here until his death, Jan. 6, 1910.

Albert Crane was born in Penn Yan, N. Y., in 1841. He came to Michigan and graduated in the high school at Ypsilanti, in 1860; studied law there for a time and entered Ann Arbor university, from which he was admitted to the bar, in 1869. He commenced practice at Ypsilanti, in 1882 went to Detroit, and in 1888 came to Grand Rapids, where he remained in practice until about 1911, when he removed to Los Angeles, Cal.

Will E. Ryan was born in Adams, Mass., Nov. 18, 1867. He graduated in the University of Michigan, in 1889, and then practiced law in Allegan, Mich., until April, 1890, when he came to Grand Rapids, and he practiced here until about 1913.

James D. Malcolm was born, Dec. 20, 1866, in Cascade township, Kent county, Michigan. He studied law and was admitted to the



bar in November, 1890, and was assistant prosecuting attorney from 1890 to 1892. He practiced in Grand Rapids until about 1907.

Andrew W. Johnston was born in Scotland, Feb. 6, 1849. He attended high school at Edinburgh and Edinburgh university. He was admitted to the bar in Grand Rapids and practiced here until his death, which occurred Dec. 12, 1913.

James J. Danhof was born, Feb. 17, 1858, at Grand Haven, Mich. He graduated in the Michigan university, in 1893, was admitted, and came to Grand Rapids the same year. He practiced here until about 1912.

Howard A. Thornton was born on a farm near Lawton, Mich., Nov. 9, 1872. He moved to Otsego when a boy and there received his early schooling. He went from Otsego to the University of Michigan, where he was graduated in 1891. Leaving Ann Arbor, he entered the law offices of Judge Sherwood, at Kalamazoo, where he remained until admitted to the bar, at the age of twenty-one years. Almost immediately thereafter he moved to Grand Rapids and maintained his residence here until his death, which occurred March 12, 1914. He was first associated with M. L. Dunham, then with Judge William J. Stuart, later with Wesley W. Hyde, then with Roger I. Wykes, and during the last year of his life he practiced independently. At different times his office associates had been Wesley W. Hyde, J. Edward Earle, Raymond W. Starr, and Glenwood C. Fuller.

James R. Wylie was born on a farm near Martin, Allegan county, in 1849. He remained in that locality until twenty-six years of age, when, after a try in the mercantile world, he entered the law department of the University of Michigan. He was graduated, in 1878, in the class with Judge George P. Wanty. He came to Grand Rapids then and began the practice of his profession in the firm of Williams & Wylie. In 1882 he went to Petoskey and entered the banking business with his brother-in-law, William L. Curtis, but returned to Grand Rapids, in 1893, and entered the legal firm of Clapperton & Wylie. In 1898 he left the legal field and became cashier of the National City Bank, and he remained interested in the banking business until his death, June 30, 1915.

George P. Wanty was born, March 12, 1856, at Ann Arbor, Mich., and his primary and academic education was received in the common and high schools of that city. At an early age he sought employment and was engaged first as clerk in a bank, of which Judge Cooley was a director, at Ann Arbor, and later he was bookkeeper for an iron manufacturing company at Bay City. At length his savings enabled him to take up the desired course of study, and he was graduated, in 1878, in the law department of the University of Michigan, entering at once upon the practice at Grand Rapids. He was first associated in the practice with Col. Thaddeus Foote, and then with Fred A. Maynard, and in 1883 a partnership was formed with Niram A. Fletcher, which continued until Mr. Wanty's appointment to the bench. He declined all political offices, but in 1900 he accepted the appointment of United States Judge of the Western District of Michigan and occupied this position until his death, July 9, 1906.

J. Byron Judkins was born at Coldwater, Ohio, and received his early education in the schools of Celina, Ohio, and in Liber College,



Indiana. He began his study of law with the firm of Nottingham & Murdock, in Big Rapids, and was admitted to the bar in 1874. He was appointed circuit judge of the Nineteenth judicial district to fill a vacancy, in March, 1880, and was elected without opposition to fill the unexpired term, in November of the same year. In all he served fourteen years as judge. He came to Grand Rapids, in January, 1894, when he joined the law firm of McGarry, McKnight & Judkins. A year later he joined the firm of Sweet, Perkins & Judkins, and in 1907 became a partner in the firm of Perkins & Judkins. This partnership continued until 1900, when Mr. Perkins became circuit judge, and Mr. Judkins continued the practice of his profession alone from that time until his death, April 23, 1915.

Orley C. Granger was born in Webster, N. Y., April 17, 1874. He came to Michigan and studied law in the offices of Turner & Carroll, at Grand Rapids, and was admitted, April 17, 1895. He was elected justice of the peace, April 4, 1904, for four years, and soon after the close of his term removed to New York City.

Clyde J. Holmes was born at Marshall, Mich., Sept. 14, 1872. He came to Grand Rapids, in 1876, was educated in the common schools and at Albion College; studied law and was admitted, June 13, 1895. In 1898 and 1899 he was connected with the law department of the Railroad commissioner at Lansing. He then practiced his profession in Grand Rapids until about 1914, when he removed to Jackson.

Glenn W. Holmes was born in Marshall, Mich., Nov. 29, 1869, and came to Grand Rapids, in 1874. After being graduated in the Grand Rapids High School, in 1887, he attended the University of Michigan and was admitted to the bar, in 1895. For a number of years he was connected with the Grand Rapids postoffice as registry clerk and finally superintendent of mails. In 1906 he left the postoffice and began the practice of law, associating himself with his father, Frank G., and brother, Clyde Holmes. He died, May 10, 1913.

Walter W. Drew was born in Williston, Mich., Sept. 13, 1873. He was educated in the schools of Grand Rapids and the University of Michigan, graduating in the literary department of that institution, in 1894, and in the law department in 1896. He then practiced in Grand Rapids until about 1909, when he removed to New York City.

Ernest L. Bullen was born in Aurelius township, Ingham county, Michigan, March 10, 1868. He was reared on a farm, attended the Mason High School and the Agricultural College at Lansing, and was graduated in the law department of the Michigan university, in 1896. He was admitted to the bar in 1895, and commenced practice in Grand Rapids, in 1906, remaining so engaged here until about 1907.

Henry M. Wallace was born at Hartland, Livingston county, Michigan. He graduated in the University of Michigan, was admitted to the bar in 1896, and practiced in Grand Rapids until about 1907.

Sylvester W. Barker was born at Syracuse, N. Y., Dec. 24, 1870. He graduated in the law department of the University of Michigan, in 1893, was admitted to the bar and practiced in Grand Rapids from 1897 until about 1907, when he removed to Seattle, Wash.

Norris J. Brown was born in Granby, Oswego county, New York, April 21, 1852. He came to Michigan with his parents, in 1855. He



attended the common schools and graduated in the Portland High School, in 1871, when he commenced teaching school and studied law in the meantime. He was admitted to the bar in 1873, at Ionia, and commenced practice. In 1888 he was elected to the State legislature, and in 1890 removed to Muskegon, where he was city attorney for one year. In January, 1897, he came to Grand Rapids and practiced here until about 1906.

Alfred H. Hunt was born in Grand Rapids, in 1870. He graduated at the Michigan university, in 1896, and was admitted to the bar. After spending two years in Detroit he came to Grand Rapids, served for a time as Referee in Bankruptcy, and practiced his profession until his death, April 30, 1911.

Jesse F. Orton was born, Feb. 23, 1870, on a farm in Niagara county, New York. He was educated in the common schools and the high school in Coldwater, Mich., and graduated in the literary department of the University of Michigan, in 1893. He took a post-graduate course at Cornell College, in 1894-5, and graduated in the law department of the Michigan university, in 1897, teaching school in the meantime. He then went to Detroit and practiced law four years, and in 1901 he came to Grand Rapids and practiced here until about 1908.

Leonorr L. Park was born in Jamestown, Ottawa county, Michigan, in 1880. He attended public schools and the Detroit College of Law, and was admitted, June 15, 1903. He began practice in Grand Rapids and remained here until about 1909.

Frank M. Ayer was born in Cadillac, Mich., Jan. 13, 1879. He graduated in the literary department of the University of Michigan, in 1901, and in the law department in 1903. He was admitted to the bar and commenced practice in Grand Rapids, where he remained until about 1911.

To go further in the enumeration of the members of the bar would be to trench upon the domain of the present, and discuss the characters of men still upon the stage of public life, which hardly comes within the province of this chapter. The bar has grown rapidly in numbers, and it is not too much to say that Grand Rapids has always been noted for the ability of its lawyers. It is said of an old Pennsylvania lawyer that he was once examining a candidate for admission to the bar, and asked him the stock question, "What is a court?" "A court," said the applicant, pompously, "is a place where justice is **judiciously** administered." "Not always," said the examining lawyer, shaking his head, "not always." The answer given in Blackstone is "a place where justice is **judicially** administered." The difference between **judicially** and **judiciously** is a marked one; and yet it may safely be said of the Kent county courts that, from the first, they have been places where justice is both judicially and judiciously administered.

Prior to 1878 there was no organized association of the bar in Grand Rapids. There had been occasional gatherings at bar suppers, where the attorneys had met at different times for social intercourse, and also from time to time they met to pay their tribute of respect to deceased associates. But early in the year mentioned above a plan of definite and permanent organization was proposed, and in that year several meetings were held to perfect it. The original purpose of the



organization was to establish and maintain the honor and dignity of the profession, to increase its usefulness in promoting the due administration of justice, and to cultivate social intercourse among its members, this declaration being found in the constitution adopted. The association also contemplated organizing a law library. The association became known as the Kent County Bar Association. Its first permanent officers were chosen, the president being D. Darwin Hughes. This association continued in existence for some time, but gradually the interest seemed to wane and meetings became irregular and finally ceased entirely.

The present Grand Rapids Bar Association was organized in January, 1902, with 106 incorporators. Its first permanent officers were Thomas J. O'Brien, president; Loyal E. Knappen, vice-president; Henry T. Heald, treasurer; Hugh E. Wilson, secretary.

A Law Library Association which was formed by the members of the bar has been in existence a number of years, and it has gathered a large and well selected library, containing most of the English and American Reports, both Federal and State, and many other valuable legal works.

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### BANKING AND FINANCE

UNSTABLE CHARACTER OF CURRENCY—WILD CAT BANKS—CITY BANK OF BREST—PERIOD OF SANE BANKING—HISTORY OF PRESENT BANKING INSTITUTIONS—CLEARING HOUSE ASSOCIATION.

Although the bank is an effect rather than the cause of industrial or commercial activity in any city or community, it is generally a good index to the state of industrial or commercial prosperity. In a review of the trade, manufacturing and transportation interests of Grand Rapids it is therefore eminently proper that its banking history should be first considered.

During the era of settlement, and even after the State was organized, the people of Michigan were not friendly to banks. This was chiefly due to the unstable character of the currency then in circulation. Most of the paper money of that day was issued by private banking concerns, remote from Grand Rapids, and went current only so long as some man of known integrity and business standing said it was good. Nor was this prejudice—if prejudice it can be called—indigenous to the Western frontier. Many of the pioneers had been forced to leave their homes in the older States and begin life anew on the margin of civilization through the failure of some "wild-cat" bank. Hence the antipathy to banks whose solvency was liable at any moment to be called into question. And it becomes necessary here to notice a series of events that had an important bearing upon the development of Kent county, as well as Michigan in general. Notwithstanding the hostility mentioned, at the beginning of 1837 there were sixteen chartered banks in the State, nine of which had been chartered by the Territorial Legislative Council and seven by the State legislature of 1836. The following is a list of these banks: Bank of Michigan, at Detroit; Bank of Monroe, at Monroe; Bank of

Pontiac, at Pontiac; River Raisin, at Monroe; Bank of Washtenaw, at Ann Arbor; Erie & Kalamazoo, at Adrian; Farmers' and Mechanics', at Detroit; Michigan State, at Detroit; Bank of Tecumseh, at Tecumseh; Merchants' & Mechanics' at Detroit; Bank of St. Clair, at St. Clair; Bank of Clinton, at Clinton; Bank of Calhoun, at Marshall; Bank of McComb, at Mt. Clemens; Bank of Constantine, at Constantine; and Bank of Ypsilanti, at Ypsilanti.

It would seem as though these sixteen banks could have done the business of this then new State, but on March 15, 1837, the legislature enacted a law providing for the incorporation of moneyed institutions. This law provided that any number of men might associate together, subscribe \$50,000 for a capital stock, and by filing articles of association with the county clerk, become incorporate. One-third of the capital must be owned in the county, ten per cent. to be paid in before election of directors, and thirty per cent. before bank notes should be issued. The law also contained this restrictive clause: "It shall not be lawful for any such banking association to issue, or have outstanding or in circulation at any time, an amount of notes or bills loaned or put in circulation as money exceeding twice and a half the amount of its stock then paid in and actually possessed; nor shall its loans and discounts at any time exceed twice and a half the amount of its capital stock so paid in and possessed."

This was bad enough, but a subsequent statute allowed them to deposit, instead of specie, a bond secured on real estate. Under the operation of this law hundreds of banks sprang into existence. Nearly every crossroads had its bank, and it is indeed a wonder that the inhabitants of any community could forego the luxury of a banking association. Every kind of property was quoted at inflated prices, and wild land, valued at three or four times its actual worth, became the security for the bank circulation of Michigan. These banks, on account of the character of their securities, were called "wild-cat banks," and the old banks were known as "chartered banks." Two banks of the wild-cat species sprang up in Grand Rapids: The Grand River Bank, with a capital of \$50,000, and the People's Bank, with a capital of \$100,000. The law required a certain amount of specie to be kept in the vaults of the bank, but this provision was evaded. The same specie served for exhibition for a dozen banks, at various intervals. The bonds and mortgages which were deposited were upon city lots in the woods, or on real estate at fictitious values. The notes of one wild-cat bank were held as capital by another wild-cat bank. They clandestinely put out a much larger circulation than the law allowed them. In these and a hundred other ways they evaded the law and practiced outrageous swindles upon the public.

Incidents connected with the operations of these banking schemes properly form a part of history, and none will serve as a better illustration than the City Bank of Brest. Brest was a magnificent city (on paper), situated at the mouth of Swan creek, about seven miles from Monroe. An excellently lithographed and beautifully colored map of the city represented it with broad avenues, lined with palatial residences and handsome grounds. The extended river front of the city had continuous lines of docks, above which towered, on either hand, lofty warehouses, filled with the merchandise of the world. The larg-



est steamers were represented as sailing up past the city, whose docks were crowded with vessels of all descriptions, while the streets were thronged with busy life. The ruins of Ninevah or Baalbec are not more desolate now than are the ruins of Brest, and it is little less a wilderness today than it was eighty years ago. But Brest had a bank, with a capital of \$100,000. It was a fair sample of a wild-cat bank, and an illustration of how those affairs were managed. The law compelled the bank commissioners to make an investigation into the affairs of the banks. Spies dogged the footsteps of the commissioners, and it was generally found out when they were to visit a bank for inspection, whereupon the affairs of that particular bank were put into favorable shape forthwith. On Aug. 2, the commissioners examined the Bank of Brest and found that its principal resources consisted of loans on bonds, \$16,000; bank stock, \$10,000; specie, \$12,900. It appears that of the specie, \$10,500 belonged to Lewis Godard, and had been received by the bank the day before examination, and was drawn out the day after examination. The \$16,000 loan on bond and mortgage was a loan to the trustees of the town of Brest, to secure which the bank received an assignment of the bonds executed by Lewis Godard for the sum of \$34,000, and also of mortgages of 118 city lots in Brest. On the day after the examination the directors assigned the bond and mortgage back to the trustees of Brest, having received nothing for the same. Seven days later an impromptu investigation of the affairs of the bank showed that the amount of specie on hand amounted to \$138.89, while the whole amount of bills of the bank which were in circulation was \$84,241.

A few days after the investigation into the affairs of the Bank of Brest, the commissioners examined the Bank of Clinton, and found specie on hand to the amount of \$11,029.36. On the day succeeding the examination, \$10,500 of this specie was drawn from the bank by the cashier, taken to Detroit and paid over to Lewis Godard, it being precisely the same specie that had done duty a few days before in the Bank of Brest. Thus the specie was carted about the country in advance of the commissioners. Isolated banks, which could not enjoy the benefits of this rotation of specie reserve, resorted to other devices. Some of them, it is said, would buy a small quantity of specie, and nearly filling small kegs with pounded glass, would cover the top with specie and thus pass the examination.

Before the bursting of this financial bubble the amount of notes of these banks in circulation is estimated to have been not less than \$300 for every man, woman and child in the State. While some bona fide banks were established, it was soon found that the law was taken advantage of by dishonest men to practice the grossest frauds and swindles. The law practically permitted these frauds, and the officers of the State, though striving honestly to do their duty, were powerless to prevent them. Banks were established in the most inaccessible places, which it was not likely the holders of the bills could ever find, and hence the bank would not be asked to redeem its currency.

When all the banks had been swept out of existence there were bills afloat representing millions of dollars. Many of these were in the hands of bona fide holders, who lost heavily thereby. Many of the bills had never been in use, and were then given away promiscu-

ously. Children used them to play with, and in the rural districts, where paper hangings were scarce, people used them to paper their rooms. The bills were engraved by Rawdon, Wright & Hatch, in the best style of their art, and were printed on a good quality of paper, so that they made the walls of a log cabin rather picturesque. When, about 1851, Louis Campau built a lookout or observatory on his house, on Fulton street hill, and was about finishing it, he said: "I am pretty rich. I shall paper this room with money. Here is the money." He brought forward a stack of bills of the defunct People's Bank, and with these the room was papered. They were still on the walls when the house was removed to make room for a more pretentious modern dwelling. Bills were scattered all over the State, thrown into old garrets, closets and book-cases. While the Civil war was in progress, thousands of dollars of these bills were resurrected and taken South by Federal soldiers, who found that the people of the South preferred them to Confederate money; in fact, they were quite as valuable and superior in point of typographical appearance. Many of these bills are yet preserved and are shown as curiosities, serving also as reminders of those exciting times, which in history are regarded as partaking both of the ludicrous and the mournful.

Looking over the field now, it is hard to understand how men of ordinary wisdom and prudence were led into this wild scheme of universal banking. But they suffered intensely for it. Kent county, which was rapidly filling up with a stirring Eastern population, received a check to her immigration and to her commercial prosperity from which she did not soon recover. But the lesson was not lost on Michigan. Upon the ruins of that utterly prostrated credit she builded so wisely that now no state enjoys greater prosperity or has a more enviable reputation for financial soundness.

The first bank to be established in Kent county was the Grand River Bank, of Grand Rapids, a chartered institution, established by John Almy and William A. Richmond. It continued in existence a few years, until forced into liquidation by the series of events already narrated.

### THE PERIOD OF SANE BANKING

About 1851 William J. Welles decided to open a banking office in Grand Rapids. The bank was opened in the old stone building on the corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets, then known as the "wedge," which stood for many years as a sign of what the early builders could do with limited means and stones from Grand river. Fire finally made an end of the building, but not until Mr. Welles had established within its walls an enviable reputation for fair and just dealing and a handsome business. Mr. Welles continued in business until June, 1861, when, owing to serious losses arising from the disturbed condition of business affairs in connection with the breaking out of the Civil war, he was obliged to close his doors. Within a reasonable time his creditors received the amount of their claims in full, and Mr. Welles ever retained the good will and hearty sympathy of all who had business relations with him.

Daniel Ball & Company commenced to sell bills of exchange on Chicago and Eastern cities, in 1852. Their business enlarged year



by year until, in connection with Mr. Welles' establishment, the necessities of Grand River Valley—rapidly filling up with a vigorous and pushing population, including many new business enterprises—were fairly well provided for. In October, 1861, Daniel Ball & Company, surrounded by similar conditions with those of Mr. Welles, and having suffered severely by failures of individuals and banks of issue in Illinois and Wisconsin, found it impossible to continue business and went into liquidation.

About the year 1860, W. B. Ledyard and M. V. Aldrich opened a discount and exchange business in the office formerly occupied by W. J. Welles, the last named having built for his especial use a neat wooden office, about where the entrance to the Arcade now is.

In January, 1869, E. G. D. Holden and Marcus W. Bates, then operating in an insurance partnership, opened in connection with their business a savings department. This was afterward merged in the Grand Rapids Savings Bank.

In 1868, E. P. and S. L. Fuller, after building a brick block there, opened a private bank at or near what is now 228 Monroe avenue, and they operated it until 1876, after which Peter Graff and H. H. Dennis (as Graff & Dennis) continued it until 1879. In 1873, Randall & Darragh (L. H. Randall and J. C. Darragh) began banking and operated a private bank until 1879. In the latter year both of these were merged in the Farmers' & Mechanics' Bank.

In 1860, Ledyard & Aldrich opened a private bank, and in the same year the interest of M. V. Aldrich was purchased by Henry Fralick. Mr. Aldrich resumed banking in 1871 and continued it until his death, when the Grand Rapids National succeeded to the business.

For a time between 1857 and 1860, Revilo Wells held forth as a private banker and custodian of other people's money. His capital, both in money and integrity, seems to have been limited, and his career was brief. After obtaining several thousand dollars of the people's money, he migrated westward and found a wider sphere of action somewhere on the California coast.

In 1870, David L. Lataurette, from Fentonville, in this State, instituted a branch in this city of his bank at the former place. He soon adopted unusual and unsafe methods of conducting banking by offering extraordinary rates of interest upon deposits. Prudent and cautious persons avoided his institution, but many fell into his trap, and within two years he succeeded in getting possession of not less than \$75,000 in money from our citizens. Secretly he left the city, and the dividends received by the Grand Rapids creditors were only nominal.

In December, 1861, M. L. Sweet opened the office formerly occupied by Daniel Ball & Company, and he, together with Ledyard & Fralick, who had succeeded Ledyard & Aldrich, continued until March 10, 1864, to transact the general banking business of the city. The national bank law was approved by President Lincoln on Feb. 25, 1863, and on March 10, 1864, under the direction of several prominent business men, the First National Bank was organized, and commenced operations with Martin L. Sweet as president and Harvey J. Hollister as cashier, with a capital paid in of \$50,000. The directorate of the new financial institution, elected Sept. 22, 1863, consisted of five members—Martin L. Sweet, Lewis Porter, John Clancy, Nelson



Burchard, and Charles Kendall. So successful did the new financial institution prove that before it was a year old it was found necessary to double its capital, the action being taken in December, 1864. In May, 1865, it was again found necessary to increase the capital of the bank to keep pace with its wonderful growth, and \$50,000 was added, making the total capital \$150,000, an increase of \$100,000 in a little more than a twelve-month. The bank continued to grow steadily, and on June 29, 1868, the capital was increased to \$200,000. At the annual meeting of the stockholders, held in January, 1871, it was decided to enlarge the directorate to nine. Those who were elected at this meeting were Martin L. Sweet, J. M. Barnett, W. D. Foster, T. H. Lyon, John Clancy, S. L. Withey, L. H. Randall, W. D. Roberts, and Amos Rathbun. The continued enormous growth of the bank's business made it advisable to again increase its capital, in 1871. A big jump was taken at this time, the capital being increased to \$400,000. In January, 1881, the stockholders decided to increase the directorate to thirteen members, and when the charter of the First National was about to expire it was decided to reorganize the bank under the name of the Old National Bank of Grand Rapids. It was also decided to increase the capital to \$800,000, the business warranting this increase. There were few changes in the personnel of the officers and directors of the First National during its twenty years of existence. The officers of the bank—Mr. Sweet as president, Mr. Barnett as vice-president, and Mr. Hollister as cashier—remained the same during its entire history, with the exception of a brief period, when it became necessary, in the transfer of some real estate, for the president, Mr. Sweet, to be superseded by Judge Withey, who served two years, when Mr. Sweet again assumed the presidency. Mr. Sweet was also the first president of the Old National Bank, and Mr. Barnett and Harvey J. Hollister, respectively, were vice-president and cashier. Mr. Sweet was elected president from year to year until his age and other circumstances induced him to give way to Mr. Barnett, who succeeded him as president. Willard Barnhart then succeeded to the vice-presidency. In 1903 the charter of the Old National was renewed until 1923. A second office of vice-president was created and Cashier Harvey J. Hollister was elected to fill the position, Clay H. Hollister being elected cashier. In January, 1904, the directorate was increased to fifteen members. In May, 1918, the capital of the Old National was \$800,000, and its entire resources amounted to over \$12,600,000, with Clay H. Hollister president, and George F. Mackenzie cashier.

No other national banks were established in the city until the early part of 1865. On Feb. 17 of that year the City National Bank was organized. Thomas D. Gilbert was its first and only president, and J. Frederick Baars its first and only cashier. The Board of Directors was composed of the following gentlemen: William B. Ledyard, Thomas D. Gilbert, Ransom E. Wood, Moses V. Aldrich, Henry Fralick, Ransom C. Luce, George Kendall, James M. Nelson, and James Miller. The capital of the bank was \$100,000. This capital was increased to \$200,000, in 1867, and in 1871 to \$300,000. Among other well known names of men who served on its Board of Directors were: Noyes L. Avery, John W. Peirce, Julius Houseman, Francis



B. Gilbert, Lemuel D. Putnam, and John C. Fitzgerald. In 1865 it was made a United States Depository. The original charter expired in 1885, its history under the name of the City National Bank having continued just twenty years. But at its organization it succeeded to the business of Ledyard & Fralick, heretofore mentioned, so that the business of the institution has been practically continuous since 1860. On Jan. 22, 1885, a new charter was secured and the name of the institution was changed to The National City Bank, and the capital stock was increased to \$500,000. The officers at that time were: Thomas D. Gilbert, president; Julius Houseman, vice-president; J. Frederick Baars, cashier, and Edwin H. Hunt, assistant cashier. Mr. Gilbert died in November, 1904, and was succeeded by Constantine Morton, who was president from 1895 to 1898, and he in turn was succeeded by Ransom C. Luce, who served as president until his death, in 1902. James R. Wylie then became president and served continuously in that position until his death, which occurred, June 30, 1915. In the meantime, in October, 1910, the National City bank, which had been rechartered in 1905, and the Grand Rapids National Bank were consolidated under the name of the Grand Rapids National City Bank, with a capital of \$1,000,000 and surplus paid in of \$200,000. After the death of Mr. Wylie, Dudley E. Waters became president of the consolidated institution and has since been the active president of the bank. The other officers at the present time are Charles H. Bender and R. W. Irwin, vice-presidents, and Ira B. Dalrymple, cashier. At the time of its being re-chartered, in 1905, the National City Bank organized, within its own stockholders, the City Trust and Savings Bank, which enabled it, under the State charter, to conduct a State bank. The stockholders in one are also interested as stockholders in the other, and the sale of the stock of one institution carries with it the sale of the other, so that the institutions, except in their charters, are identical.

The Grand Rapids National Bank was organized and commenced business March 9, 1880, as successor to the banking house of M. V. Aldrich. The directors were C. H. Bennett, Edwin F. Uhl, Freeman Godfrey, W. B. Ledyard, W. G. Herpolsheimer, M. J. Clark, Paul Steketee, Enos Putman, George H. Long, and its officers were C. H. Bennett, president; T. C. Sherwood, cashier; Freeman Godfrey, vice-president; and Edwin Hoyt, Jr., assistant cashier. The capital stock was \$200,000. The business of the bank was very prosperous and, July 1, 1882, the capital was increased to \$300,000, and again, on Aug. 11, 1883, to \$500,000. President Bennett died in April, 1881, and Edwin F. Uhl was elected as his successor. T. C. Sherwood retired from the office of cashier, in April, 1883, and William Widdicomb was elected in his place, holding the office nearly six years, when he was succeeded, in January, 1889, by Nathan B. Brisbin. Edwin F. Uhl served as president until 1894, when, by reason of his appointment as assistant secretary of state in President Cleveland's second administration, he withdrew from the position and was succeeded by Enos Putman, who served until his death, Jan. 11, 1898. Shortly afterward, Mr. Uhl, who had recently returned from a memorable career as ambassador at the court at Berlin, was again elected president of the bank, holding the position until his death, May 17, 1901. Mr.



Uhl was succeeded by Dudley E. Waters, who held the position until the consolidation of the Grand Rapids National Bank with the National City Bank, and he is now the president of the consolidated institution. Nathan B. Brisbin died in July, 1889, about six months after assuming the duties of cashier, and was succeeded by Frank M. Davis, who filled that position until the consolidation of the two banks.

The Grand Rapids Savings Bank was organized, March 23, 1870, with a capital stock of \$100,000, of which 50 per cent. was paid in. The following named persons were elected trustees for the ensuing year: Alfred X. Cary, William S. Gunn, Henry M. Hinsdill, Solomon O. Kingsbury, Edwin S. Pierce, Sluman S. Bailey, Eben Smith, John R. Stewart, Samuel M. Garfield, and E. G. D. Holden. The officers were A. X. Cary, president; George W. Allen, vice-president; and Marcus W. Bates, treasurer. On April 24, 1872, the bank was reorganized with the same officers, and the capital of \$100,000 was fully paid in. In September, 1878, for prudential reasons the capital stock was reduced to \$50,000, but ten years later it was again increased to \$150,000, and still later it was increased to its present size, \$400,000. In 1874 M. W. Bates was succeeded in the cashiership by George R. Allen, who in turn was succeeded by D. B. Shedd, in 1879. F. A. Hall succeeded Mr. Shedd, July 1, 1885, and he was succeeded by the present cashier, F. S. Coleman, in 1907. Succeeding Mr. Cary as president, for various periods of time, we find on the records the familiar names of George W. Allen, Isaac Phelps, and James D. Robinson. The last named was succeeded, in 1892, by J. M. Stanley, and at the same time E. S. Pierce became vice-president. In 1893 Charles W. Garfield was elected president and W. D. Talford vice-president, and in 1895 Orson A. Ball was elected vice-president. The officers in 1918 were as follows: William Alden Smith, president; Adolph H. Brandt, vice-president, and F. S. Coleman, cashier. In May, 1918, the bank showed deposits of \$7,568,343.45, and a capital and surplus account of \$750,000. The Michigan Exchange Private Bank was organized in the Spring of 1910, and was absorbed by the Grand Rapids Savings Bank, in January, 1917.

The Fourth National Bank is the successor of the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank, which was organized under an act of the Legislature of Feb. 16, 1857, and acts amendatory thereof, for discount, deposit, and circulation, with a capital of \$100,000. The organization was effected Feb. 1, 1879, with forty-three stockholders, and was to terminate Jan. 31, 1909. Under the articles of association the following were named as directors: Leonard H. Randall, William Sears, James M. Nelson, Amasa B. Watson, Thomas M. Peck, Henry H. Dennis, and Edwin Bradford, and the following were elected officers: Leonard H. Randall, president; Henry H. Dennis, vice-president, and James C. Darragh, cashier. Articles of association were filed with the register of deeds Jan. 27, 1879, and with the secretary of state the following day. On Jan. 23, 1880, the capital was increased to \$200,000. On March 16, 1880, L. H. Randall resigned as president and Amasa B. Watson was elected as his successor. On May 10, 1880, H. H. Dennis resigned as vice-president, and on June 7 Thomas M. Peck was elected to succeed him. On July 26, 1880, J. C. Darragh resigned as cashier, and H. H. Dennis served as acting cashier until Nov. 18, 1880, when I. M. Weston was elected to the position. On Oct.



18, 1881, Thomas M. Peck resigned as vice-president, but his resignation was not accepted until Jan. 17, 1882, at which time a resolution was passed to wind up the affairs of the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank and reorganize under the name of the Fourth National Bank, with nine directors. On Jan. 9, 1882, the Fourth National Bank was chartered—circulation \$50,000. On Jan. 17, A. J. Bowne was elected vice-president and the capital was increased to \$300,000 and the circulation to \$100,000. On Feb. 27, 1884, A. B. Watson presented his resignation as president and I. M. Weston as cashier, but they were not accepted until May 27, when A. J. Bowne was elected president, I. M. Weston vice-president, H. P. Baker cashier, and H. W. Nash assistant cashier. On Jan. 13, 1885, George C. Peirce was elected vice-president, to succeed I. M. Weston. On Sept. 7, 1886, the circulation was reduced to \$50,000. On Oct. 9, 1888, H. P. Baker resigned as cashier, and on the same date Delos A. Blodgett was elected vice-president in place of George C. Peirce, and H. W. Nash was elected cashier. Upon the death of Mr. Bowne in 1892, his chair as president was filled by D. A. Blodgett. S. F. Aspinwall was elected vice-president, William H. Anderson cashier, and John A. Seymour assistant cashier. In 1893 George W. Gay succeeded Mr. Aspinwall, and on March 21, 1898, upon the voluntary retirement of D. A. Blodgett from active responsibilities, William H. Anderson was made president, John A. Seymour cashier, and Levant Z. Caukin, assistant cashier. George W. Gay died in 1899 and John W. Blodgett succeeded him as vice-president of the bank. The officers in 1918 were: William H. Anderson, president; Levant Z. Caukin, vice-president, and J. Clinton Bishop, cashier. From the time that Mr. Anderson was elected cashier in 1892, the bank has shown a steady growth. Its capital, which was then \$300,000, has remained the same, while its surplus and undivided profits, which were then about \$37,000, are, in 1918, over \$300,000, regular dividends having been paid in the meantime. Its deposits were then about \$800,000, and are now over \$3,000,000. In 1902, parties interested in this bank secured the majority of the stock of the People's Savings Bank, and in the same year they further purchased a control of the stock of the Fifth National Bank, since which purchase representative directors of this bank have served also as directors in these other institutions.

The Fifth National Bank of Grand Rapids was organized March 9, and opened for business April 15, 1886, with the following Board of Directors: William Dunham, J. D. Robinson, George E. Dowling, R. G. Peters, W. Steele, C. E. Belknap, Leonard Covell, Hubert Weiden, Henry Idema, T. W. Strahan, J. E. Earle, Peter Weirich, and A. D. Plumb. An office was opened in a building erected especially for it on West Bridge street. The project of starting a bank on the West Side had been agitated several times previous to the organization of the Fifth National, but without success, and not by the parties who finally undertook the project. The officers elected at the outset were: William Dunham, president; J. D. Robinson, vice-president, and William H. Fowler, cashier. Mr. Dunham was president until Oct. 16, 1890, when he was succeeded by J. D. Robinson, and he in turn by J. Edward Earle, who held office until Nov. 4, 1897. C. D. Stebbins was then elected president and held office until April 28, 1899, when



R. D. Graham was elected to that position, and he was the last president of the institution under that name. In March, 1902, the bank's offices were removed from the west side of the river to the east side, and established on the corner of old Canal and Erie streets. On Aug. 1, 1908, the Fifth National Bank was merged with the Commercial Savings Bank, under the corporate name of "Commercial Savings Bank of Grand Rapids, Michigan."

The Kent County Savings Bank was organized under the State law Dec. 24, 1884. The incorporators were forty in number and the capital stock was placed at \$50,000, divided into one thousand shares of \$50 each. The first Board of Directors consisted of A. J. Bowne, A. B. Watson, Joseph Heald, D. A. Blodgett, J. C. Bonnell, John A. Covode, James Blair, E. Crofton Fox, and Thomas J. O'Brien. The first meeting of the directors was held Jan. 16, 1885, when the Board organized by the appointment of the following officers: Joseph Heald, president; J. C. Bonnell, vice-president; J. A. S. Verdier, cashier. The bank was opened for business Jan. 26, 1885. On May 3, 1887, J. A. Covode was elected vice-president, to succeed Mr. Bonnell. On Jan. 4, 1889, the bank met with a great loss in the death of its president, Joseph Heald, who had won the confidence and respect of his associates, as well as the high esteem of the people of Grand Rapids. John A. Covode succeeded to the presidency, and from 1888 T. J. O'Brien was vice-president, until 1891, when Henry Idema, being the active manager of the institution, was elected to that position. J. A. S. Verdier remained as cashier. In 1908 the bank was reorganized and chartered as the Kent State Bank, with Henry Idema as president, John A. Covode as vice-president, and J. A. S. Verdier as cashier. These officers have remained unchanged up to the present time, with the exception that, in 1912, Casper Baarman succeeded Mr. Verdier, who is deceased, as cashier. This bank has a capital stock of \$500,000, and in May, 1918, had a surplus and undivided profit account of \$749,000, with deposits of \$8,494,000.

The Michigan Trust Company was organized July 15, 1889, its functions being: The acceptance of any trust to which it may be appointed—the classes of trusts having broad range—the company acts as executor of wills, administrator of estates, guardian for minor children and for incompetent persons; trustee for married women in respect to their separate property; trustee for any person or corporation in the management of property; trustee for bondholders under mortgage made by individuals or corporations; registrar and transfer agent for railroads and other corporations; agent for the person or corporations in the care of their property and in collections; assignee and as receiver; depositary for court funds and the funds of estates and trustees; and as agent for other persons in the purchase and sale of all kinds of investment securities, stocks, bonds, mortgages, etc. It also takes charge of the whole or any part of any person's estate; invests idle funds in bonds and mortgage or other securities as directed; loans its capital on real estate and collateral security, and maintains and manages safety deposit vaults, renting safes in which may be stored the securities or valuables of the renter. It receives and stores any valuables and becomes responsible for their safe keeping, and it transacts as agent any business with which it may be entrusted. Perhaps the most important feature of the business trans-



acted by such a company is its administration of estates. By law such a company is obliged to deposit \$100,000 of securities with the Treasurer of State, to be held by him in trust for the security of its patrons. Its capital is \$200,000, paid in; the additional liability of the stockholders is \$200,000. The affairs of the institution are under the supervision of the State Banking Department, subject to the examination of the Commissioner of that department, and its statements are published at the same time as those of State banks. The features of the law under which such trust companies are organized were conceived by Grand Rapids parties. The act was drafted by them, was presented to the Legislature in the session of 1889, was passed, and was approved by the Governor May 23, and is known as "An act to provide for the incorporation of Trust, Deposit and Security Companies." In May, 1918, the capital was \$200,000, deposits \$1,183,000, and surplus and undivided profits, nearly \$925,000. The present official force is as follows: Lewis H. Withey, president; Willard Barnhart, vice-president; Henry Idema, second vice-president; F. A. Gorham, third vice-president; Claude Hamilton, secretary, and John H. Schouten and Emerson W. Bliss, assistant secretaries. Mr. Withey has been president of the company since its inception, has given it his entire time, and has built up an institution which ranks among the best of its kind in the country.

In 1893, the Peninsular Trust Company was organized by prominent capitalists, among whom was Enos Putman. It did a modest business for some years, but in 1900 this company sold out its interests to the Michigan Trust Company, which occupied the field alone until 1913, when the Grand Rapids Trust Company was organized, with William E. Elliott, president; Robert D. Graham, Lee M. Hutchins, and Joseph H. Brewer, vice-presidents; Adolph H. Brandt, treasurer, and Hugh E. Wilson, secretary. In 1914, Robert D. Graham became president, William E. Elliott, first vice-president, and Joseph A. Carroll, assistant treasurer. In 1915, Alex. W. Hompe succeeded Mr. Elliott as vice-president, and in 1917 Leon T. Closterhouse was made assistant secretary. In May, 1918, the capital of the Grand Rapids Trust Company was \$300,000, deposits \$382,000, and surplus and undivided profits, \$175,000.

The Commercial Savings Bank was organized on May 4, 1903. It began business in the Fall of that year on the corner of old Canal and Lyon streets, in the building formerly occupied by the Fourth National Bank. On Nov. 4, 1904, a branch office was established at the south end of Division street. This bank was organized by Charles B. Kelsey, who had been in the banking business seventeen years, filling positions at different times in the Kent County Savings Bank and the People's Savings Bank; in fact, he organized the People's Savings Bank, Feb. 9, 1891, and was the first cashier of that institution. On Aug. 1, 1908, the Commercial Savings Bank was merged with the Fifth National Bank, under the corporate name of "Commercial Savings Bank of Grand Rapids, Michigan," and as such it has continued up to the present time. The present officers of the bank are as follows: William H. Anderson, president; Christian Bertsch, vice-president; C. L. Ross, cashier, and D. D. Pratt, assistant cashier. A statement of the bank, made in May, 1918, showed deposits of



\$2,478,000; capital stock, \$300,000; surplus and undivided profit account, \$87,000.

The State Bank of Michigan was established in May, 1892. Daniel McCoy was the first president and Charles F. Pike was cashier. In July, 1892, M. H. Sorrick succeeded Mr. Pike as cashier, and in April, 1903, Caspar Bauman succeeded H. N. Morrill as assistant cashier. This bank was started with a capital of \$200,000, which was later reduced to \$150,000. It did a profitable business until 1908, when it was merged with the Kent County Savings Bank into the Kent State Bank.

The People's Savings Bank was organized in 1891, largely through the instrumentality of Charles B. Kelsey. The capital stock of the bank was fixed at \$100,000, and has remained at that figure, but it has a surplus of \$125,000, and at the time of its May, 1918, statement, the undivided profits were \$32,645.91. The present officers of the bank are: W. H. Gay, president; E. D. Conger, vice-president; T. William Hefferan, cashier, and William Smitten, assistant cashier.

The South Grand Rapids State Bank was established in 1906. It has a capital stock of \$25,000, with surplus and undivided profits of \$33,185.79. Its officers are as follows: W. T. Shaffer, president; W. H. Richardson, vice-president; Benjamin C. Porter, cashier, and Benjamin C. Porter, Jr., assistant cashier.

The Farmers' and Merchants' Bank (Madison Square) was established in 1914, and it has a capital stock of \$25,000, with surplus and profits of \$1,800. Its present officers are: William McCrodan, president; Bert M. Heth, vice-president; Frank J. Cook, cashier; Charles A. Mills and Henry J. Kleiman, assistant cashiers.

The private bank of George E. Ellis was opened for business in 1917, and in June, 1918, a Morris Plan Bank was established in Grand Rapids. The Comstock Park State Bank, at Comstock Park, was also organized in the Fall of 1917. Of this institution, Delbert H. Power is the president, Dwight Lydell is vice-president, Glenn S. Whitmore is cashier, and Robert L. Power is assistant cashier.

In Kent County, outside of the city of Grand Rapids, there are a number of prosperous banking institutions. The Farmers' & Merchants' Bank, at Ada, was established in 1916. Its capital stock is \$25,000. It is a branch of the bank of the same name in Grand Rapids.

The Farmers' State Bank of Alto was organized Oct. 18, 1904, and commenced business on Dec. 28 of the same year. Its capital stock is \$20,000, and its deposits have grown as follows: In 1905, \$19,160.98; 1910, \$153,781.77; 1915, \$194,376.38; 1917, \$273,988.20. The first officers were: George E. Bartlett, president; Edson O'Harrow, vice-president; John Q. Watts, vice-president, and Frank E. Campau, cashier. At present the bank has a surplus of \$10,000, and resources of over \$300,000. The present officers are: Edson O'Harrow, president; Carrie M. Campau and Volney C. Walton, vice-presidents, and Edward B. Campau, cashier.

The Byron Center Bank was established in 1912. P. Holleman is the president and R. O. Deweerd is the cashier.

The State Bank of Caledonia, established in 1904, has a capital



stock of \$20,000. Charles Rice is president, F. W. Ruchs and Isaac C. Wenger are vice-presidents, and J. C. Proctor is the cashier.

The Cedar Springs State Bank, established in 1898, has a capital stock of \$20,000. Fred Hubbard is president, James A. Skinner is vice-president, H. W. Wheeler is cashier, and Lee Griswold is assistant cashier.

The Grandville State Bank, established in 1907, has a capital stock of \$20,000. D. M. Jenison is president, J. D. Brook and H. Minderhout are vice-presidents, and George M. Corrigan is cashier.

The Kent City State Bank has a capital stock of \$20,000. Manly W. Burtch is president, A. H. Saur and B. N. Keister are vice-presidents, and M. E. Moore and C. A. Johnson are cashiers.

The village of Lowell has two prosperous banking institutions. The Lowell State Bank, established in 1891, has a capital of \$30,000. E. D. McQueen is president, S. S. Lee is vice-president, Daniel G. Mange is cashier and Lena Murphy is assistant cashier. The City State Bank was established in 1907 with a capital stock of \$25,000, and with A. W. Weeks as president and W. A. Watts as cashier. Its present officers are: R. Van Dyke, president; D. G. Look and William T. Condon, vice-presidents; Harry Day, cashier. Its resources have gained over \$100,000 during the past year and now amount to a total of \$460,000.

The McCords State Bank was organized July 10, 1917, and commenced business in the Fall of that year, with a capital stock of \$20,000. The officers are: John E. Rockefeller, president; William S. Hesche, vice-president; Edward B. Campau, cashier, and George F. Campau, assistant cashier. The directors are John E. Rockefeller, Edward B. Campau, William S. Hesche, Charles S. Cook, and Henry Kieft.

The Rockford State Bank was established in 1906, and it has a capital stock of \$20,000. H. C. Hessler is president, J. L. Snyder and L. E. Sears are vice-presidents, D. F. Beverly is cashier, and E. J. Muir is assistant cashier.

The Exchange Bank of Sand Lake was established in 1905, and has a capital stock of \$10,000. R. T. Hamilton is cashier and F. E. Shattuck is assistant cashier.

Sparta has two banking institutions. The Sparta State Bank, established in 1898, is capitalized at \$18,000. C. A. Bloomer is president, Manly W. Burtch is vice-president, C. A. Johnson is cashier, and O. S. Burke is assistant cashier. The People's State Bank, established in 1911, has a capital stock of \$25,000. Albert A. Anderson is president, C. J. Rice and H. A. Shaw are vice-presidents, and L. A. Anderson is cashier.

The Grand Rapids Clearing House Association was organized Dec. 30, 1885. Its charter members were the Old National Bank, the National City Bank, Grand Rapids National Bank, Fourth National Bank, Grand Rapids Savings Bank, and the Kent County Savings Bank. The Fifth National Bank was organized in 1886, and joined the Association in April of that year. The first officers of the Association were Harvey J. Hollister, president; H. P. Baker, secretary; Alonzo B. Porter, manager. The present officers are: Henry Idema, president; Eugene D. Conger, vice-president; George F. MacKenzie, secretary; Clyde L. Ross, treasurer, and Otis H. Babcock, manager.

The Clearing House performs an important part in the relationship of the banks with each other, in that it gives opportunity for frequent discussion on matters of interest to the different members, and enables the bankers to meet for consultation as to the best method of handling their business. In addition to this it has provided for certain safeguards which may be used in time of financial stress. It results in a very friendly feeling among the banks and a determination to stand together to protect the public from disastrous financial crises. In 1893 occurred a financial panic in this country, which was apparently the culminating effect of a period of over-speculation. Banks throughout the country began to fail and each day some new disaster followed until depositors became almost universally timid and made steady and quiet withdrawal of funds from their banks, even though no specific criticism might have been made against them. This withdrawal came so rapidly that the local banks became seriously concerned as to their ability to keep on paying out currency continually and have it hidden away and not used for immediate circulation. Deposits in all the city banks shrank from \$9,591,000, in December, 1892, to \$6,598,000, in October, 1893,—nearly \$3,000,000, or 31 per cent.—while loans, bonds and mortgages were called in from \$9,796,000 to \$7,707,000, a reduction of over \$2,000,000, or 21 per cent. Such reductions as these in a manufacturing community are only brought about by very strenuous effort on the part of both lender and borrower. The crisis was passed in October. It speaks highly for the ability and character of the men in control of the banking interests that no bank was obliged to close its doors during the emergency, and all regained what deposits they lost and many more besides. Since that time nothing of especial interest has effected the banks as a whole, with the exception of the panic in 1907, and this caused barely a ripple in the banking circles of Grand Rapids.

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## CHAPTER XL.

### THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY.

THE PIONEER CABINET MAKER—WILLIAM HALDANE—OTHER EARLY WORKMEN—HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT—PROGRESS BY YEARS.

By William Widdicomb.

The furniture industry of Grand Rapids had its birth in the system prevailing eighty or more years ago in the smaller towns throughout the country. The cabinet maker produced by hand the simple pieces of furniture required, offering them for sale in his own workshop, or, when the business was sufficiently advanced, a small salesroom adjoining. Usually the cabinet maker was both workman and merchant. All of the earlier efforts at furniture making in our city were of this character.

The first cabinet maker to appear in our valley was William Haldane, so long and pleasantly known as "Deacon" Haldane. His home and little cabinet shop were located where now stands the Michigan Trust Building. Archibald Salmon came at about the same



time and had a shop near Deacon Haldane's. Samuel F. Butler appeared not long after, locating on Bond avenue, near the present Reid Auto Company's garage. Several years later Abraham Snively established a little furniture store in a building where the Morton House now stands. Deacon Haldane only of these men remained permanently in the business, passing away at a good old age not many years ago.

At about the time of Deacon Haldane's arrival David Wooster, Zephaniah Adams and John L. Smith had a chair shop about where the present gas works are located, for which power was afforded by the small stream running down from Division street; and here was the first furniture produced with the aid of power. There is little evidence now that a stream sufficiently large to furnish power existed at that spot, yet I can clearly recall the brook which entered Grand River just below the lower boat landing, after meandering through the lowland. The dam had entirely disappeared, but some of the timbers and other evidences of the water power were there in my earlier days. It may surprise you to know that a stream of this magnitude existed where now there is not the slightest trace of such stream, nor even the valley through which it flowed.

In this little water power shop chairs were made to be peddled around the country among the few settlers. It is said this power was used as early as 1834 by Smith, yet further enquiry which I have made does not confirm this fact. Deacon Haldane always claimed he was the pioneer cabinet maker of the valley.

These earlier settlers were followed by Loren W. Page, James T. Finney and Nehemiah White and, later on, by William T. Powers, Albert Baxter and Cyrus C. Bemis. Baxter's History of Grand Rapids states that Powers and Haldane introduced working by machinery about 1847. This first use of power was on the canal in a portion of the sash and blind shop which Deacon Haldane's brother was then operating, and was simply the use of the machines the brother had in the sash and blind business. About 1853 the Deacon set up a small steam engine on the bank of the river, where his cabinet shop had been located for several years, at the place now occupied by the central portion of the Pantlind Hotel Building. The first furniture manufacturing of any magnitude with the aid of power was established by William T. Powers on the canal bank at Erie street. E. Morris Ball became a partner of Mr. Powers in 1851, with a store on Pearl street where now is the Rood block. Mr. Powers retired from the firm in 1855 and the business was continued by Ball, Noyes & Colby. It is well known that at about this time one or two of the Pullman Brothers appeared and conducted a small furniture establishment upon old Canal street, opposite Crescent street.

E. W. and S. A. Winchester built a factory at the foot of Lyon street, where the excavation had been made for a lock at the time the canal was built, the original intent of the canal being an improvement in navigation, rather than a factor for producing water power. The Winchester Brothers' store was upon old Canal street where the present Heyman Company's store is located. The severe panic of 1857 compelled the Winchester Brothers to transfer their business to C. C. Comstock, which date represents Mr. Comstock's connection with

furniture manufacturing. Mr. Comstock succeeded in keeping the business alive during the strenuous times and conditions prevailing after the 1857 panic until the greater activity appeared resulting from the war, and in 1863 formed a partnership with Messrs. James and Ezra Nelson, the name becoming Comstock, Nelson & Company. In 1865 T. A. Comstock, Mr. Comstock's son, was taken into the firm, also Manly G. Colson and James A. Pugh, who were foremen in the manufacturing departments, the firm name changing again to Nelson, Comstock & Co.

In 1857 George Widdicomb rented a room in the pail factory, south of Bridge street bridge then operated by David Caswell, having his store on old Canal street directly opposite Bronson street, now Crescent street.

The present Godfrey residence, east of Fulton Street Park, was occupied during the early war days by Henry Wilson as a cabinet shop. He was the first cabinet maker to produce furniture of the finer quality. No doubt there are yet in Grand Rapids pieces of the furniture which he made. Prior to that time any expensive furniture was shipped from the East by way of the Lakes and Grand River to the city. I recall some very sumptuous furniture brought here by Dr. Shepard about 1858, it having been seriously injured in transit, and my father was called upon to make the necessary repairs.

While my father had shipped furniture to Milwaukee prior to the war, the manufacturing business, as we understand it today, was established by Julius Berkey in 1860, with Alphonso Hamm as a partner, in a small shop on Erie street, Chicago being the market for what they produced. The partnership was soon dissolved, for Mr. Hamm was an exceedingly visionary man and there could be no accord between him and a man of Julius Berkey's energetic and prudent character. Later Julius Berkey occupied a small portion of the second floor in a factory building built by William A. Berkey in the Fall of 1857, where the present Berkey & Gay Company's factory now stands. It was a great barnlike structure of two floors, 50 by 100 feet in dimension, used as a planing mill and sash, door and blind factory. William A. Berkey was a very hopeful man and felt confident the day was not far distant when he could develop sufficient business to occupy these great premises. The times were very stringent and this hope was not realized until in the years following the war. Julius Berkey's small part of the second floor was enclosed from the remainder of the open lofty building, and there he engaged in making a walnut table which was soon known as the "Berkey table," a little, inexpensive affair and the origin of the widely known and magnificent Berkey & Gay business. Mr. Berkey continued the business with a fair degree of success and in 1862 formed a partnership with Elias Matter, Mr. Berkey, perhaps, having the experience and Mr. Matter a very small sum of money as capital.

Let me say a word of my personal recollection of each of these two men. I came to Grand Rapids, Oct. 1, 1856, and found employment immediately with the Winchester Brothers, boarding at a small place on Bond street, where stands the Bertsch Building. My mechanical instincts led me down to the sawmills on the canal in the evening after the work of the day. There, in a planing mill on the



south side of Erie street where now stands the Bissell Company's office, I saw a fine looking, stalwart young man feeding pine strips into a flooring planer. As I watched the work with much interest the young man greeted me pleasantly, and I remarked that I had worked some in a planing mill at Havana, N. Y. I made other visits to him during the Fall, and thus my acquaintance with Julius Berkey began. From that day to his death our acquaintance was intimate and pleasant, Mr. Berkey's courtesy and ability always commanding my respect and esteem.

Before the war days Elias Matter was working as a chair maker in the Winchester shop where I had found employment, and during the winter months, when business was dull, he took up the occupation of school teaching—was a successful country district school teacher and, as I clearly recollect, a man of exceptional energy. I recall when he was teaching district school at what is now known as Ravenna, then Crockery Creek. He taught school for \$18 a month and five evenings out of the seven gave writing lessons in several district schools from two to six miles distant from his own school, at \$1 per term of twelve lessons. Mr. Matter would walk this distance each evening after his own school was closed, teach the writing school until 9 o'clock and walk back to where he happened to be boarding under the old system of "boarding 'round" for the teacher. Mr. Matter accumulated a modest sum in this manner, and this was the money which enabled him to become Julius Berkey's partner, his capital being about the same as the value of Mr. Berkey's machinery, which had been made almost entirely by his own hands. I will have a word or two more to say later on regarding Mr. Berkey's vigorous personality and the manner in which he so successfully developed his business.

Buddington & Turnham made an effort at manufacturing some time in 1862. The early residents yet living will recall the Commodore who conducted an auction store on Monroe street in a little building adjoining the Rathbun House. As I was in the war I have no knowledge of what persuaded the Commodore to enter into a business of which he was totally ignorant, unless it were Mr. Turnham's persuasions. They were an illy assorted pair and did not continue long in existence, but did produce two of the capable furniture manufacturers of our city, E. H. Foote and John Widdicomb, who, when they came from the army, took their earlier lessons there.

The first directory of Grand Rapids was published in 1865. It shows William Widdicomb the only additional name to those which I have already mentioned, and Berkey & Matter changed to Berkey Brothers & Company. This directory has an interesting account of our earlier days by Prof. Franklin Everett, descriptive of our progress to a city of then about 10,000 inhabitants; yet in all of this long article there is not a single line about furniture manufacturing. It is evident our infant industry was not of sufficient moment to command any attention from the professor.

The next directory, issued in 1867, notes Berkey Brothers & Company as Berkey Brothers & Gay, through the addition of George M. Gay to the firm. Widdicomb & Capen and Spanjer & Son are listed as manufacturers and E. W. Winchester resumes business.



In 1869 our City Directory mentions Widdicomb Bros. & Richards, "Manufacturers of Bedsteads" at Fourth street and G. R. & I. Railroad, and Atkins, Soule & Company, corner Ottawa and Fairbanks streets, as manufacturers of chamber furniture. The five men composing this firm were a partnership of workmen from Nelson, Comstock & Company's. They were not successful and made an assignment, in 1870, to William A. Berkey. Mr. Berkey continued the business for a time, eventually organizing out of it the Phoenix Furniture Company as manufacturer of parlor furniture, which was the origin of the present Phoenix Furniture Company.

Several changes occurred at about this time: Elias Matter withdrew from Berkey Brothers & Gay to enter Nelson, Comstock & Company through the purchase of T. A. Comstock's interest, and that firm became Nelson, Matter & Company. The two junior partners, Mr. Pugh and Mr. Colson, died and their interest was purchased by Stephen S. Gay.

In 1872 William A. Berkey withdrew from Berkey Brothers & Gay, devoting his entire attention to the Phoenix Furniture Company's affairs. More, Richards & Company also appear, composed of More, Richards, DeLand, Foote and Baars, doing business at the corner of old Canal and Trowbridge streets. Richards and DeLand retired and More, Foote & Baars continued the business on Butterworth avenue, building the factory premises now occupied by the Valley City Desk Company. The Grand Rapids Chair Company was incorporated in October of 1872 and the buildings were erected in 1872 and 1873.

For a time the City Directory was published intermittently, and the directory for 1872 in its announcement says, "A good directory is a necessity in a city like this and the town is large enough to require an annual publication"; yet this necessity was not so urgent as to call for a classified list of its business concerns and industries. I did not find any additions to the manufacturing for that year.

In 1873 Berkey Brothers & Gay were incorporated as the Berkey & Gay Furniture Company, and Widdicomb Brothers & Richards as the Widdicomb Furniture Company.

In 1874 we find More, Foote & Baars changed into the Grand Rapids Furniture Company, Fred Baars withdrawing from the firm and taking an interest with the Widdicomb Furniture Company. That year lists several additions to the business: Sylvester Luther & Co., Michigan Furniture Co., and John Bradfield, upper Monroe street, the origin of the Luce Furniture Co.

Some six or eight workmen not mentioned in the directory formed a co-operative concern, in 1875, which did not continue long in existence. It is peculiar that no manufacturing of this character has succeeded in this city, while nearly all the manufacturing establishments of Jamestown and Rockford originated in this manner.

I must now take time for historical mention of the new concerns or additions and changes to those already established for each year to 1918, as follows:

1876—No additions; strenuous times. 1877—Wm. A. Wight, Erie street. 1878—E. A. Roberts, 28 Mill street. 1879—Folger & Ginley, 28 Mill street; George W. & Hiram Gay, 434 Canal street; Roberts Brothers succeed E. A. Roberts. 1880—Wolverine Furniture



& Chair Co., Pearl street; Kent Furniture Co., North Front street, L. H. Randall president, J. H. Wonderly vice-president, C. W. Watkins treasurer, E. C. Allen secretary; McCord & Bradfield, R. C. Luce president, T. M. McCord vice-president; New England Furniture Co., succeeding Ward, Skinner & Brooks, sash and door manufacturers; Sligh Furniture Co., L. H. Randall president, Chas. R. Sligh secretary; Stockwell, Bryne & Co.; John Waddell & Co.; Stow & Haight. 1881—Wm. A. Berkey & Koskul, Lyon street; F. L. Furbish; Oriel Cabinet Co., North Front street. 1882—The Folding Chair & Table Co.; Ford Furniture Co., Wm. Winegar president, J. L. Shaw vice-president, Chas. H. Hooker secretary and treasurer; The Luther & Sumner Co.; Worden Furniture Co., Henry Fralick president, A. E. Worden secretary and manager; Winchester & Moulton. 1883—Stockwell & Darragh Furniture Co.; Nathan Strahn; The Union Furniture Co.; Fogg & Higgins. 1884—Stephen Cool & Co., Fourth street; S. E. Allen, 44 Mill street; Peninsular Furniture Co. 1885—West Michigan Furniture Co., Third street; Wm. A. Berkey Furniture Co., succeeding Berkey & Koskul. 1886—Stow & Davis; Strahn & Long, composed of Harry W. Long, John E. Moore, Nathan Strahn; Union Furniture Co., Grand Trunk Junction, successors of S. Luther & Company, with A. S. Richards, E. G. D. Holden and Cyrus E. Perkins as officers; Grand Rapids School Furniture Co.; E. F. Winchester & Co., 34 Mill street. 1887—Wm. T. Powers again enters the furniture business; I. C. Smith, J. C. Darragh and Jos. Penny doing business as the American Dressing Case Co, Canal street; Empire Furniture Co., 32 Mill street; S. L. King, Pearl and Front streets; Welch Folding Bed Co. 1888—Clark & Hodges Furniture Co., North Canal street. 1889—Valley City Rattan Works; J. H. White, T. Bedell and H. Bedell, doing business as the Crescent Cabinet Co.; Grand Rapids Cabinet Co., M. C. Burch and B. DeGraff, officers; Grand Rapids Parlor Furniture Co.; Grand Rapids Table Co.; Martin L. Sweet. 1890—Klingman & Limbert Chair Co.; Birge & Shattuck; Grand Rapids Enamel Furniture Co.; Universal Tripod Co., the original of the Royal Furniture Co.; Michigan Chair Co. 1891—C. E. Amsden; Richmond & Lyman Co.; Standard Table Co.; Valley City Table Co. 1892—Stickley Bros. Co.; Central Furniture Co.; Mueller & Slack Co.; Royal Furniture Co.; McGraw Manufacturing Co. 1893—C. A. Berge Upholstering Co.; Grand Rapids Church Furniture So. 1894—C. P. Limbert & Co.; Valley City Desk Co.; Grand Rapids Wood Carving Co.; Ryan Rattan Chair Co.; Grand Rapids Carved Moulding Co. 1895—J. A. Anderson & Co.; Grand Rapids Seating Co.; H. N. Hall Cabinet Co.; Grand Rapids Standard Bed Co.; Hansen Bros.; Retting & Sweet. 1896—Hake Manufacturing Co.; Arlington Cabinet Co.; Grand Rapids Bookcase Co.; Grand Rapids Fancy Furniture Co.; Luce Furniture Co., succeeding McCord & Bradfield; Fred Macey Co.; Michigan Art Carving Co.; Grand Rapids Wood Carving Co. 1897—Reuben H. Smith; John Widdicomb Co. 1898—Novelty Wood Works; Boyns-Morley Co.; Gunn Furniture Co.; Wernicke Furniture Co. 1900—Chase Chair Co.; Raymond Manche Co.; Chas. F. Powers Co.; Wage-maker Furniture Co. 1901—Furniture City Cabinet Co.; C. S. Paine Co.; Standard Cabinet Co.; Van Kuiken Bros. 1902—Century Furniture Co.; Grand Rapids Show Case Co.; Grand Rapids Table Co.;



Nachtegall & Veit; G. S. Smith. 1903—Burnett & Van Overan; Ideal Furniture Co.; Imperial Furniture Co.; Linn-Murray Furniture Co. 1904—Grand Rapids Cabinet Co.; Greenway Furniture Co.; Hetterschied Manufacturing Works; Michigan Order Work Furniture Co. 1905—Cabinetmakers Co.; C. A. Greenman Co.; Michigan Desk Co.; Retting Furniture Co., succeeding Retting & Sweet; Shelton & Snyder Co. 1906—Veit Manufacturing Co.; Grand Rapids Cabinet Furniture Co.; Grand Rapids Parlor Furniture Co.; Kelley & Extrom; Luxury Chair Co.; John D. Raab Chair Co.; Raab-Winter Table Co.; Sweet & Biggs Furniture Co. 1907—Grand Rapids Upholstery Co. 1908—Criswell Keppler Co.; Dolphin Desk Co.; Michigan Seating Co.; Rex Manufacturing Co. 1909—Adjustable Table Co.; O. G. Burch; Fritz Mfg. Co. succeeds Fritz & Goedel Mfg. Co.; Johnson Furniture Co.; Kelly, Extrom & Co. succeeds Kelly & Extrom; Charles P. Limbert Co.; Marvel Manufacturing Co.; Snyder & Fuller; Sterling Desk Company; Welch Manufacturing Co.; Wilmarth Show Case Co. 1910—Bungalow Furniture Co.; Colonial Furniture Co.; Criswell Furniture Co. succeeds Criswell-Keppler Co.; Grand Ledge Chair Co.; Grand Rapids Art Furniture Co.; Grand Rapids Wood Carving Co.; Heyman Co.; Keil-Anway Co.; W. A. Kelley succeeds Kelley, Extrom & Co.; C. B. Robinson & Sons succeed Robinson Furniture Co.; Snyder Furniture Co.; Steel Furniture Co.; White-Steel Sanitary Furniture Co. 1911—Grand Rapids Bungalow Furniture Co.; Michigan Cabinet Co.; Practical Sewing Cabinet. 1912—The Ainway Co.; Davies-Putnam Co.; Gilpin Furniture Co.; Kindel Bed Co.; Metal Office Furniture Co.; Valley City Chair Co.; Welch Mfg. Co. 1913—Binghampton Chair Co.; W. H. Chase; Fisher Show Case Co.; Grand Rapids Sheraton Furniture Co.; Kelley Chair Co.; Peter Lindquist; Lundeen & Bengtson; National Seating Co.; Practical Sewing Cabinet Co.; Charles Vander Laan. 1914—Alt & Batsche Mfg. Co.; American Mfg. Co.; Grand Rapids Studio Furniture Co.; Lindquist Furniture Co. succeeds Peter Lindquist; Quality Furniture Co.; Rockford Chair & Furniture Co. 1915—Boyce Brothers; Grand Rapids Book Case & Chair Co.; Lanzon Furniture Co.; Lindquist Furniture Mnfrs. succeed Lindquist Furniture Co.; Lundeen & Bengston Co. succeeds Lundeen & Bengtson; Nowaczyk Handcraft Furniture Co.; Wallace Furniture Co. 1916—Grand Rapids School Equipment Co.; Paalman Furniture Co. 1917—Brower Co.; Asa U. Chase; Grand Rapids Fibre Furniture Co.; Kelley Furniture Co.; L. H. D. Fibre Furniture Co.; McLeod Furniture Co.; Special Furniture Co.; Welch Furniture Co.; Windsor Upholstering Co. Total 1917—64.

The surprising number of manufacturing efforts with the moderate number that have survived is, perhaps, a true indication of the vicissitudes which attend the furniture manufacturing business. I might mention further that not more than three or four new institutions for the manufacture of fine grades in furniture have been successfully established in the United States within the past ten years. There is no business demanding such unremitting personal attention as our industry, and it may well be asked, "Why was the business so successfully established in Grand Rapids? What peculiar condition or circumstance has given this town its prominent position?" We had



no natural advantages originally. Lumber was abundant, but it was equally abundant anywhere and everywhere in the Northern country. Water power was as free as the lumber, yet water power was to be found also all over the Northern States. Not only did we have no special natural advantages, but we were placed at an exceedingly inconvenient location for manufacturing furniture, with but one railroad and that terminating at the lake upon one side and Detroit upon the other, with no connections whatever to other portions of the United States, the river and lake our only practicable method of transportation to the then growing West.

When, eventually, we did have a connecting railroad with the Michigan Central and Lake Shore & Michigan Southern our whole product was freighted through towns where many well-established competitors were located. Upon the Michigan Central were Buchanan and New Buffalo, both manufacturing upon a larger scale than ourselves. Upon the Lake Shore were to be found Laporte, Mishawaka and South Bend, each having one or more successful furniture factories. Chicago was the distributing point, and there were, as at present, other and stronger competitors, yet the city of Grand Rapids rapidly passed all of them.

During these same days Boston was the Eastern manufacturing point for all fine chamber furniture, and Cincinnati was equally prominent. Several large and eminently successful concerns were in operation in both cities which eventually passed out of existence, the Boston people maintaining that this was due to the ruinous competition of Grand Rapids and one or two other Western towns—competition they could not meet; yet they had all the advantage in prior possession of the field, abundant capital, fine factories and a near location to the market. In the face of all this, Grand Rapids steadily developed, both in the character of its product and the magnitude of its works.

It is one of my theories that it is not so much location or natural advantage that secures exceptional business success, but, rather, the personality of the men who happen to originate and develop it, and to this very feature do I ascribe the importance which Grand Rapids achieved in furniture manufacturing. Fortunately for Grand Rapids, its pioneer furniture manufacturers were the happy possessors of those important characteristics required for success in their own industry, and among them no one man displayed such pre-eminence in energy, industry, originality and business prudence—all the factors that are demanded for our business—as Julius Berkey. Mr. Berkey had all of these to a marked degree, and I doubt whether he knew the meaning of the word "discouragement."

George W. Gay was equally capable. While Mr. Gay may have had at first but indifferent technical knowledge in manufacturing, he did possess the talents which make men prominent among their fellows. He had shown energy and earnest zeal in business affairs up to the time he entered the Berkey & Gay Company, and the years immediately following Mr. Gay's entry were epoch making for the industry which was to render Grand Rapids so famous. Within a short time, from 1866 to 1873, Berkey Brothers & Gay developed into an institution of such magnitude as to warrant capitalization at a very

large figure. When I glance back over those days—days that cover the early struggles of our industry—I cannot refrain from amazement that such work could be accomplished so rapidly. I see them occupying the original factory on the canal, then occupying the upper floors of the buildings at 116-118 Monroe avenue; from there to several buildings on old Canal street opposite Crescent, receiving first premium at the State Fair, opening a branch in New York City, taking a high position in the Eastern trade, and all this prior to 1875.

Mr. Berkey possessed the instincts of the manufacturer to a marked degree and Mr. Gay gave evidence of equally keen insight into the mercantile portion of the business while rapidly acquiring skill and exceptional judgment in the artistic designs for which they were widely known. They also had that quality of human nature which enabled them to employ men successfully, securing their good will, their earnest co-operation; in fact, they were indefatigable in their attention to all the details of the business; nothing too large to grasp, nothing so small but it received attention. For those early stages both Mr. Berkey and Mr. Gay developed exceptional originality and enterprise. They were the first to introduce expensive improvements in machinery, the first to display originality in design, the first to employ skilled designers and the first to bring skilled mechanics from other sections of our country, and even from foreign lands; no difficulty ever deterred them when they had once decided their business required improvement and skill beyond which our own workmen could furnish. Their ability and progress were a stimulus to every other manufacturing concern in Grand Rapids; their competition of that straightforward business character every fair-minded man is willing to meet. I give especial credit to that firm for our development in those early days. Very soon equally capable men appeared, organizing and conducting other concerns, which added to the strength and individuality of our business and our progress was steadily promoted until the position of Grand Rapids before the United States was assured.

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## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE RETAIL INDUSTRY.

FIRST RETAIL TRADE—INDIAN TRADERS—TRADING POSTS—SPRING OF 1837—THE DRUG BUSINESS—HARDWARE—MERCHANTS OF THE VILLAGE PERIOD—SYNOPSIS OF RETAIL INDUSTRY.

Grand Rapids is pre-eminently a manufacturing city, but in the birth, growth and development of any community it is the retail industry that first appears. And it retains its importance in the industrial life of the community, coming in contact, as it does, with the individual units which constitute the great body of citizenship. It would be exceedingly interesting, were it possible, to give a complete history of the development of the retail history in Grand Rapids, but for obvious reasons this cannot be done, and our efforts must therefore be confined to a general outline, with a few individual mentions, and these will be selected on account of their long and continued existence and their relative importance.



The first retail trade of Grand Rapids was by the Indian traders who brought goods into this vicinity to exchange for furs. This was carried on for many years at certain seasons, even before Grand Rapids became a regular trading post. Joseph La Framboise commenced making regular trips to the Grand River Valley, about 1796. The late Richard Godfroy once said that in 1834 he was informed by the older Indian chiefs here that a Frenchman named La Framboise established a trading post by their village at these rapids, and built a cabin there, as early as about 1806. The chiefs described the hut as built of logs and bark, chinked with clay, and about thirty feet in length, and said they assisted him in making it. Probably the exact date of the coming of that trader is beyond verification, but it appears certain that Madame La Framboise had a trading hut on the north side of Grand River, some two miles below the mouth of Flat River, in the early years of the Nineteenth century. The post was stocked by the American Fur Company.

It was told by the late W. M. Ferry that as early as 1810 Pierre Constant, an agent of the American Fur Company, established a trading post on Grand River, a little distance from its mouth. Not many years later, a French trader named Rudell was in or near the Indian village on the west side of the river, near these rapids. He died there, leaving a family, in which were two or three daughters. Rix Robinson was the successor of Madame La Framboise. He came to the mouth of the Thornapple River, in 1821, as the agent of the same company, purchased her stock and outfit, and besides the post at Ada had several other trading stations. Louis Campau came to Grand Rapids in 1826 and engaged in the Indian trade, under a Government license, and for the next seven years there was a brisk retail trade with the Indians, with an occasional sale to white men who were missionaries, surveyors or land-lookers, until the first settlers came, in 1833. The Indian trade continued for many years after the coming of the white men, and for many years both white men and red men traded over the same counter and called for the same goods.

For many years Louis Campau, Antoine Campau, Toussaint Campau, and Richard Godfroy carried on a retail trade with the settlers as well as with the Indians. In November, 1833, Jonathan F. Chubb became a settler and brought with him a small stock of goods for trade. Mr. Chubb was a very active and it might be said a versatile man. In 1852 he opened a store for the sale of farming implements. Stone, Chubb & Co., about 1854, opened a factory and sales-rooms at the corner of old Canal and Huron streets. W. S. H. Welton was not a manufacturer, but opened an agricultural warehouse and seed store on Monroe street at about the same time. Jefferson Morrison came with a stock of goods, in 1835, and commenced trade in buildings that stood facing what is now Campau Place. He continued in trade there, with but a brief intermission, until 1866, when he retired from business. He had a checkered experience, sometimes successful, both in trade and speculation, and again the victim of reverses. In his earlier business life he had an extensive acquaintance with the Indians, who named him Poc-to-go-ne-ne. His name and credit were known and trusted throughout the State in the dark days when banks broke, and when he, with many others, was compelled to resort to the issue of personal notes, or "shinplasters," to keep trade alive.



James and Dwight Lyman opened a small store on Market street, opposite the Eagle Hotel, in 1835, but in the following year they sold the stock to George C. Nelson. The first drug store was opened in 1836 by William G. Henry. The first book and stationery store was opened by John W. Peirce in 1836, at the corner of Bond avenue and Crescent street, where now is the engine house. In 1844 he removed his business to the west side of old Canal street, corner of Erie, where he remained in mercantile trade thirty years. In 1853 he built the first brick store on old Canal street, a handsome building, for the front of which he imported cream-colored brick from Milwaukee, the first importation here of that sort. While he suffered two or three severe losses by fire, he accumulated a fair competence.

A glance at the retail business of Grand Rapids in the Spring of 1837 is interesting. At what is now called Campau Square, Antoine Campau was selling teas, groceries, wines and liquors, and at the same time trading in furs and Indian supplies; also pipes, tobaccos, cigars, oils, brushes, "mould and dip candles," and "other articles too numerous to mention." He had the entire confidence of the Indians, with whom he dealt largely. Across the way from this store, where the Lovett Block stands, was Orson Peck, "wholesale and retail dealer in groceries." The wholesale trade was chiefly giving a small discount on a large sale. In later years, Peck lived at Lowell. Next south of Antoine Campau's place was Jefferson Morrison, dealing in all sorts of goods then marketable. Over Morrison's store was a paint shop, where 7x9 and 8x10 glazed sash were for sale by the painter, John Beach. In the first newspaper issued, Mr. Beach advertised himself as a "house, sign, carriage and ornamental painter, imitator of woods of every description, paper-hanger and glazier." He alone, doubtless, was able to attend to the wants of the people in the painting line, when there were not probably more than fifty houses worth painting within ten miles. Down Market street, opposite the Eagle Hotel, was James M. Nelson & Company, with dry goods, hardware and groceries, and on the next corner below was the store of A. H. Smith & Company, stocked with clothing, dry goods, hats, boots and hardware. Nearby Toussaint Campau had a similar store, and Richard Godfroy another. Martin Ryerson began in this region as a clerk in the Godfroy establishment, and later in life became wealthy at Muskegon and Chicago. Up Monroe street there were a few shops and stores not advertised in the newspaper of that time. William G. Henry and N. H. Finney were at or near the place where the Morton House now is. Over in "Kent," as the north part of the hamlet was called, was the Kent Bookstore, at which was advertised a mixed assortment—books, stationery, pocket compasses, lucifer matches, snuff boxes, maps, razors, oysters, cigars, ready-made clothing, drugs and medicines and boots and shoes. E. W. Emerson dealt in hardware, crockery and groceries on old Canal street, "opposite the mammoth mill." J. J. Hoag had a drug store near the corner of Bond avenue and Crescent street, and over it was the shop of "C. H. Taylor, draper and tailor." Samuel L. Fuller was a surveyor and drafter, and Hopkins S. Miles, surveyor and map maker. There were several parties proffering bargains as real estate and insurance agents. Carroll & Lyon were selling saws, chains,



mill supplies, leather and lanterns. John Almy wanted proposals for excavating on the canal, the foot of which at that time was several rods above Bridge street. This comprises nearly all the business advertised in the first newspaper issued in Grand Rapids.

The retail business here began, as did that of all stores in those days, with the miscellaneous traffic in all sorts of articles for domestic use—from pins and needles to axes and crow-bars; from cotton thread to flannels and jeans; from vinegar to whiskey and brandy; from salt to salt pork and butter; from tacks and shoe-pegs to ten-penny nails and spikes; from pepper and spice and West India molasses, to maple and loaf sugar; from ladies' slippers to stoga and calf-skin boots; from pepper boxes to tin and earthen milk pans, and jars and jugs; from gimlets to post-augers, and from wooden chopping bowls to tin bakers and window glass—a general medley of all sorts and sizes. Some of the first comers were traders in a small way, and for many years the storekeepers along Monroe street had about equal success with the farmers round about, in their efforts to eke out an economical existence. During the first fifteen years after settlement there was comparatively little classification of goods in the stores. The man who kept pork and pickles also sold silks and calicoes, and nail hammers and hatchets. But after a time came the branching out into specialties in trade.

As a specialty the drug business took the lead. Dr. Charles Shepard was probably the first in Grand Rapids to open a shop for the sale of medicines. He began the trade in drugs in a small way, but sufficiently large for the small town, soon after his coming, in 1835. Francis J. Higginson was doubtless the next in the drug trade. Their small stores were on the north side of Monroe street, below Ottawa. After some years Dr. Shepard sold his interest in the trade to Lemuel D. Putnam, who continued it steadily until 1887, when it was transferred to F. J. Wurzburg. In 1857 the building and stock were totally destroyed by fire, but the business was immediately re-established in a new building on the south side of Monroe street. Mr. Wurzburg continued the business at the old stand from 1887 until 1897, when he disposed of the stock and it was removed. For a time, in 1844, Lovell Moore operated as a druggist and chemist on Monroe street. In 1845 Samuel R. Sanford had a drug store in Irving Hall, which afterward passed into the hands of Barker & Almy, and again was carried on for some time by William G. Henry. A drug house of long standing is that at Nos. 184-186 Monroe avenue, in the old Mills & Clancy block, which in the last sixty years has been carried on successively by E. A. Truax, Henry Escott, James Gallup, Mills & Lacey, C. E. Westlake, J. C. West & Company, and since 1904, one of the series of West's Drug Stores, the others being located at 91-93 and at 251 Monroe avenue. Within the years between 1855 and 1875, among others in the drug business were C. H. Johnson, W. H. DeCamp, E. B. Escott, Charles N. Shepard, Lorenzo Buell, L. B. Brewer, S. R. Wooster, E. R. Wilson and John Harvey. Later, among the prominent ones were William Thum and his two sons, Hugo and Ferdinand, George G. Steketee, F. H. Escott, G. T. Haan, W. E. White, M. B. Kimm, J. D. Muir, W. H. Tibbs, Thomas M. and John E. Peck, Charles G. Perkins, Charles S. Hazeltine, W. H. Leeuwen, and many



more. In 1859 there were five drug stores in the city; in 1867, nine; in 1875, eighteen; in 1885, thirty-four; in 1890, five wholesaling and fifty-seven retailing; in 1900, three wholesaling and sixty retailing; in 1910, three wholesaling and seventy-five retailing, and in 1918, four wholesaling and seventy-nine retailing.

The hardware business was the next line of trade which became specialized in Grand Rapids, and in this Foster & Parry may be considered the pioneers. Wilder D. Foster came in 1838 and worked for a time at the tinner's trade for E. G. Squier, and then entered into partnership with him, opening a small shop in a building owned by George M. Mills, on the north side of Pearl street, near Monroe, where they advertised to "make to order on short notice tin and sheet iron ware, stovepipe, tin conductor pipes and eavetroughs." In February, 1841, this partnership was dissolved, and Foster continued the business in the employ, or as a lessee, of Mills. In 1845 came Thomas W. Parry, also a tinsmith by trade, and entered into partnership with Foster, the firm name being Foster & Parry. They worked together about nine years. In November, 1848, they removed from the Mills site to the west elbow, near the junction of old Canal and Monroe streets, the place of business being below Irving Hall and facing up Monroe street. This was, in part, where now stands the extensive hardware store of Foster, Stevens & Company. On Jan. 1, 1855, Mr. Parry retired from the firm, and was succeeded by Henry Martin. The business had grown rapidly, and in 1856 Martin Metcalf was admitted to partnership, the firm name being Foster, Martin & Company. From these beginnings grew the mammoth store and factory of Foster, Stevens & Company, whose building is one of the finest for its uses in the city. In August, 1845, Joseph Stanford started a "copper, tin and sheet iron manufactory" at the corner of old Canal and Crescent streets, where now is the Grinnell Block, and there he conducted a moderate business for several years. In the Summer of 1846, William H. McConnell started a small tinshop in connection with a hardware store on the south side of Monroe street, two doors above Waterloo. With him, then or soon afterward, was his brother, John McConnell, a practical workman, who continued the business there for a time, and afterward for many years on old Canal street, with a fair degree of success. Later came in other retail dealers in hardware, and in nearly every house where the hardware trade has been a specialty, the tin and sheet iron business has been carried on to a greater or less extent. Among those who operated shops may be noticed: Goodrich & Gay, on old Canal street, 1858; William S. Gunn, who with his sons built up a very large trade on Monroe street, with a wholesale house on South Ionia; De Long & Scribner on Bridge street, for a short time after the Civil War; William P. Kutsche, for fifteen years or more, east side of old Canal near Michigan street; Carpenter, Judd & Company, in 1873 and for a few years afterward, near the present Pantlind Hotel. At later dates there were: John Whitworth & Company, West Bridge street; Peter Dogger, toward Coldbrook on Ottawa street; Maris, De Graaf & Company, 52 Monroe; J. A. S. Verdier, Spring street; William Miller, South Ionia; Frank Leitelt and F. A. Prindle, West Bridge street; Ferdinand Scheufler, Michigan; N. B. Kromer & Son, Plainfield ave-



nue; Rickard Brothers, South Division; Whitworth & Alden, 327 Bridge; Barstow & Jennings, Michigan; Melis Hardware, Grandville avenue; Blakeley & Jennison, 102 South Division, and Schmidt Brothers, 758 Fulton.

The very early mercantile business clustered on Market street, near the Eagle Hotel corner, where were the Lymans, A. Hosford Smith, and others; and another little nucleus was at the intersection of Ottawa with Monroe street, where three or four general assortment stores were kept. Still another was at the foot of Crescent street, and as far up as Bond avenue, and also there were two or three little stores in the vicinity of the Hermitage Hotel. In 1842 there were only about a dozen stores of all sorts in the village, but these were as many as were necessary to accommodate the few thousand people then in the valley.

When the city was incorporated, in 1850, a business and professional summary was published, which showed in the place twenty dry goods, two hardware, two clothing, four drug, two hat and cap, and two book stores, twelve grocery and provision stores, ten boot and shoe stores, eight public houses and victualing establishments, and two printing offices. At that time also, not as commercial establishments strictly, but contributing to the trade and resources of the town, were two tanneries, three flouring mills, five saw-mills, between forty and fifty factories and mechanical shops of various kinds, three bakeries, two regular meat markets, and about one hundred carpenters and joiners. There were then seven churches, with eight resident ministers, twelve lawyers and six physicians in the city. From that time forward there was a rapid increase of both mercantile trade and manufacturing business contributing thereto. In 1855, along the streets were upward of sixty stores of various kinds, besides thirty groceries. Eight steamboats and eight barges and tows were plying to and from this port in 1855. These and similar facts were encouraging to the growing and ambitious city. By that time there was less of mixed trade with general assortments of goods in the mercantile line. It was branching out into classifications, such as dry goods, clothing, hardware, groceries, jewelry, yankee notions, etc., each distinct from the others.

To recall the names of some of the early merchants may be interesting. Take, for instance, a period of five or six years from and after 1846. In the grocery trade, which in those days generally included liquors, were Clancy & Brother, Heman Leonard, Harry Eaton, Gideon Surprenant, Sinclair & King, R. C. Luce, and others. Heman Leonard began in the grocery trade on Monroe street, and he afterward gradually changed to the crockery business. About 1868 he built a brick block on the site of his original small wooden store. He continued in and steadily increased his crockery trade during his life; but some years previous to his death he associated with himself his sons—Charles H., Frank E. and Frederick Leonard—and they afterward magnified their traffic largely. Harry Eaton was a genial and entertaining host at a neat little grocery and restaurant which stood at about the place where the entrance now is to the Pantlind Hotel. In 1846 Ransom C. Luce began trade as a groceryman in a small wood building on the north side of Monroe, nearly opposite Market street,



and continued in business there some sixteen years, when, in 1863, he built at that place a three-story brick block. In 1856 he erected the first four-story brick block on Monroe street, at the southwest corner of Ottawa, and this was afterward known as Luce's Block, where is now the Herpolsheimer establishment.

Among the general merchants of the village period may be mentioned Benjamin Smith & Company, Young & Luther, Rose & Covell, Sheldon Leavitt, Kendall Woodward, William Bemis, Boardman Noble, Talford & Porter, George & John Kendall, James Lyman, the Winsors, Roberts & Son, G. C. Nelson & Co., C. H. & L. E. Patten, and J. W. & P. R. L. Peirce. Kendall Woodward was in trade for some years at the intersection of Pearl street and Monroe avenue. William Bemis was forty years or more a merchant on Monroe street, and at his death his sons, the Bemis Brothers, succeeded to his trade. In the boot and shoe business were the brothers Ringuette, and Perkins & Woodward. Dealing in drugs and medicines were Shepard & Putnam, W. G. Henry, Sanford & Wood, and Barker & Almy.

Many of the large retail stores of the city had their origin in small beginnings, long ago, as has been illustrated in the mention of the hardware firm of Foster, Stevens & Company, who had its origin in a tinshop established by Wilder D. Foster on Pearl street, about 1839. Thus the business of the Friedman-Spring Dry Goods Company commenced when Henry Spring formed a partnership with David Burnett and Amos Rathbone, in February, 1854, and at the time of his death Mr. Spring was the veteran among the dry goods merchants of Grand Rapids. He began business as a clerk in a small general assortment store in the village of Cannonsburg, where barter was the fashion of the time. Aspiring to something more, in 1849 he came to Grand Rapids and applied to Jefferson Morrison, then one of the leading merchants of the place, for a position, and received it. Morrison's store stood near where now is the beautiful four-story front whose sign reads "Friedman-Spring Dry Goods Company." In February, 1854, while in the employ of Lewis Porter as clerk in a clothing store, Mr. Spring had an invitation from two enterprising men of Grand Rapids—who were looking for some bright young man of good habits to whom they could intrust the management of a large stock of goods—to unite his business ability with their capital. They were David Burnett and Amos Rathbone. Mr. Spring promptly accepted their proposal, and after a few years his partners retired from the mercantile firm, leaving him sole proprietor. From this modest beginning has grown the fine business which for many years was so well known as the firm of Spring & Company, and now as the Friedman-Spring Dry Goods Company. From November, 1860, until the Spring of 1876, Mr. Spring was associated with Edwin Avery, under the firm name of Spring & Avery. The building occupied is a brick structure, four stories and basement, 44x265 feet, fronting Monroe and extending through to Louis street. This was built immediately after the straightening of Monroe street and opening of Campau Place. The trade of the establishment is both wholesale and retail.

The book business of the E. Higgins Company commenced in 1859, when Henry M. Hinsdill established a book store at what is now 188 Monroe street. The business was moved afterward to what is



now 196 Monroe street, and in 1881 it was moved to the present location of the Boston Store. In the early history of the establishment, Chester B. Hinsdill and Charles D. Lyon became associated with Henry M. Hinsdill under the name of Hinsdill Brothers & Company. In 1870 the Hinsdills were bought out by Charles W. Eaton and C. D. Lyon, and the firm name of Eaton & Lyon made its appearance in the book trade. In the same year the owl, whose spectacled countenance was for years so familiar to newspaper readers in Western Michigan, was adopted as a trade-mark. The original owl was a stuffed bird bought at auction and set in the display window of the store, and from a portrait of this bird, painted by Lawrence Earle, Fred S. Church designed the trade-mark. After moving to the Boston Store location the business of the establishment grew until, with the allied plant of the Eaton, Lyon & Allen Printing Company, it did a very large business. In 1892, Palmer, Meech & Company started in business at 112 Monroe and 119 Ottawa. The firm of Eaton, Lyon & Company changed to Lyon, Beecher & Kymer, and in 1897 the two firms consolidated under the corporate name of Lyon, Beecher, Kymer & Palmer Company, and two years later it became Lyon, Kymer & Palmer Company. This continued until 1903, when the company was reincorporated for \$80,000, under the name of W. Millard Palmer Company, wholesale and retail dealers in books and stationery and manufacturers of stationery novelties. In 1909 the stock was removed to No. 140-144 Monroe street, and in 1911 was sold to E. Higgins & Company, located at 138 Monroe.

Continuing the record of book sellers and stationers, and recurring to the early establishment of John W. Peirce, which stood at the northeast corner of Bond avenue and Crescent street, it may be said that, judging from his advertisements, his assortment of books was somewhat mixed. In the Spring of 1841 he had for sale "at the book store," "a large assortment of saw-mill saws," and wanted at the same place, "two hundred bushels of oats." In 1844 he moved from that location to the west side of old Canal street, on the south corner of Erie, where he gradually worked out of the book trade and into general merchandise. In 1848 James D. Lyon opened a book and stationery store at the east corner of old Canal and Pearl streets. After him, William B. Howe, until 1856, and then George P. Barnard continued the business at the same place until about 1866, when George K. Nelson and Charles W. Eaton, in partnership, bought the stock. Subsequently this firm became Nelson Brothers & Company (George C., George K., and James F. Nelson), and it remained in business at what is now the Herpolsheimer corner until the early nineties. George P. Sexton opened a news stand in November, 1857, in the postoffice, where he sold periodicals for a year or two. Among other early book-sellers were John Terhune, Jr., about 1854, in the Rathbone Block, and afterward in the Luce Block, and C. Morse, a little later, on old Canal, near Erie street. About 1860 J. S. Nevius & Son had a book store in the Nevius Block. In 1874 George A. Hall opened a news stand, with a small stock of books, in the Arcade. With several successive partners, the management of the business remained in his hands and grew into a large trade. In 1887 the store was removed to 115 Monroe street, and about 1893 the stock was sold to



Eaton, Lyon & Company. Other firms later established in the line of stationery and news were: Buchanan & Company, No. 5 South Division avenue; Spraker & Hogadone in the Arcade, and F. H. Seymour in the New Kendall Block. F. M. Hulswit, at 6 Monroe avenue, and D. J. Doornink, at 92 Monroe, were the first to supply reading matter to the Holland citizens. At the present time there are sixteen establishments in Grand Rapids that handle books and stationery at retail.

In considering other retail mercantile establishments in the city of Grand Rapids, it may be said that the business of the Herpolsheimer Company was commenced at Michigan City, Ind., in 1865, when C. G. A. Voigt and William G. Herpolsheimer formed a co-partnership for the dry goods trade. In 1870 they established a branch store in Grand Rapids, and it soon became their main business. They located first at 127 Monroe avenue, then moved to 123 Monroe avenue, then to 105 Monroe avenue, and finally to 87-89 Monroe avenue, which was their business home for more than twenty-five years, until the firm was dissolved and the Herpolsheimer Company and the Grand Rapids Dry Goods Company were organized. The Herpolsheimer Company located at the corner of Monroe and Ottawa avenues, in 1902. On May 8, 1904, the company entered its new building.

The business of Paul Steketee & Sons, at 88-94 Monroe avenue, 28-42 Fountain street, and 87-91 Ionia avenue, commenced in 1862, when the firm of Doornink & Steketee was organized. They did business for some time at 118 Monroe avenue. In 1872 the business was moved to Holland, Mich., but in May, 1878, the present firm of Paul Steketee & Sons was organized and the present business established.

The business of the J. C. Herkner Jewelry Company had its origin in 1870, when J. C. Herkner commenced business for himself on Monroe street.

The retail business of H. Leonard & Sons had its origin in a general store established by Heman Leonard at 156 Monroe avenue, in 1844. The stock was gradually changed to that of crockery and fancy goods. It remained on Monroe avenue until a number of years ago, when it was moved to the corner of West Fulton and Commerce streets.

The retail business of Peck Brothers was established in the Spring of 1876, at the corner of Monroe and North Division streets, where it has since continued. The business was transferred here from Newburg, N. Y.

The grocery business of John Killeen & Son, at 128 Michigan street, had little or no change from the time it was founded, in 1867, by John Killeen, until it was terminated by the death of its founder, Nov. 1, 1909.

The business of Barclay, Ayers & Bertsch began in 1875, when E. P. Preston, of Chicago, established a store at 86 Monroe avenue for selling leather and belting. E. G. Studley was bookkeeper for the concern and after two or three years bought the stock. The store was moved to 189 Monroe avenue, and then to 163 Monroe avenue, and finally to 110-112 Pearl street, where it remained until 1907, when the firm became Barclay, Ayers & Bertsch, and the place of business was changed to 321-323 Bond avenue.



The business of Thomas W. Strahan & Son, the West Side merchant tailors, was established in 1879, when Thomas W. Strahan opened a store at 340 Bridge street, and it has since been continued at that place, with the exception of about five years, when Mr. Strahan was in business on Monroe street.

A synopsis of the retail industry in Grand Rapids discloses the fact that the different lines of trade are divided as follows: Agricultural implements, 11; automobile accessories, 7; automobile parts, 3; automobile tires, 23; bakers and confectioners, 69; books and stationery, 16; carpets, oil cloth, etc., 9; cigars and tobacco, 40; clothing, 47; coal and wood, 50; coke, 11; confectioners, 86; corsets, 5; crockery, 4; cut glass, 4; cutlery, 2; department stores, 6; druggists, 79; dry goods, 70; fish, oysters and game, 4; flour and feed, 26; fruits, 6; furniture dealers, 34; furs, 2; gloves, 2; grocers, 448; hardware, stoves and tinware, 52; hats and caps, 15; hay and straw, 16; jewelry, 5; lumber, 11; meats, 143; millinery and fancy goods, 55; notions, 11; shoes, 77.

Lack of space forbids detailed mention of every individual industry in the city, but what has been said of the growth of those mentioned is true in greater or less degree of everyone in Grand Rapids. Throughout the entire field of activity, the heads of the various establishments seem to be actuated by the same motives, viz: to handle articles of superior merit, and to follow along conservative lines, never wasting capital and energy in uncertain ventures. It has been found by American cities that the enterprise and energy of individuals can be considerably augmented by co-operation of commercial, industrial and professional factors. There are opportunities for promotion of local interests in every community—opportunities which cannot be fostered by single individuals on the one hand, nor by the municipal government on the other. This truth seems to have been realized by some of Grand Rapids' business men a third of a century ago, for in November, 1887, a Board of Trade was organized, with a large membership, and with George G. Briggs as president. The Board is interested in all lines of activity that tend to advance the city's civic and industrial welfare.

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## CHAPTER XLII.

### LITERATURE AND JOURNALISM

THE PIONEER EFFORT—SKETCHES OF NEWSPAPER MEN—FACTS CONCERNING NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PERIODICALS—LITERATURE—GRAND RAPIDS AUTHORS AND THEIR PRODUCTIONS.

Grand Rapids, at the beginning of the year 1837, was a straggling village of some 200 inhabitants. It can hardly be truthfully said that there was at that time "a long felt want" for a newspaper, but the pioneer journalist is never very far behind the pioneer farmer and artisan. In the Fall of 1836 the Kent Company purchased the office material of the Niagara Falls Journal and shipped it from Buffalo on the steamer Don Quixote. The boat was wrecked off Thunder Bay Island, and the press and material were transferred to a sailing

vessel, reaching Grand Haven late in the season. When it was landed, George W. Pattison purchased the printing outfit and in the winter had it brought up the river on the ice by dog trains—six dogs to a sled. The sled which brought the press broke through the ice some miles below the Rapids and went to the bottom of the river. The press was fished out and brought to town. Mr. Pattison was a native of the State of New York, born about 1814. At the age of ten years he began his apprenticeship in a New York printing office. In 1834 he started the *Daily Western Star*, the first daily ever published in Buffalo. In 1836, with others, he started the *Calhoun County Patriot* at Marshall, Mich., and the same year published the first number of the *Niagara Falls Journal*. His partner got into trouble and the paper failed. About this time John Almy, as a representative of the Kent Company, made a trip to Buffalo, and while there he met Mr. Pattison, purchased the outfit of the defunct Buffalo paper, as above stated, and the result of the interview was that Mr. Pattison decided to come to Grand Rapids, and on April 18, 1837, the initial number of the *Grand River Times* made its appearance. It was a six-column folio, the first page of which was filled with miscellany; the second contained President Van Buren's inaugural address; on the third page was a collection of advertisements, gotten up in a style characteristic of that early day.

Mr. Pattison was the editor and also looked after the interests of the business and mechanical department. With the sparse population of Grand Rapids and its environs, it is hardly to be supposed that the proprietor of the *Times* depended to any great extent upon his subscription list for a revenue. The office of publication was located on old Canal street, a little south of Lyon, and a goodly part of the support of the paper was derived from the real estate interests of Mr. Campau and the Kent Company who had land for sale. The paper's main object was to call the attention of prospective settlers in the West to the advantages of Grand Rapids.

The *Times* is still living, though it bears a different name. In the Spring of 1838, Mr. Pattison sold the paper and its appurtenances to Charles I. Walker, and went to Calhoun county. He later took up his residence in Detroit, where he was connected with a considerable number of newspapers and for a number of years conducted a book store. After leaving Grand Rapids he was for some years a Quaker preacher.

Mr. Walker assumed control of the *Times* and conducted it until January, 1839, when he sold it to James H. Morse & Company. It was then suspended for a time and job printing alone was carried on in a small wooden building near the corner of Crescent street and Bond avenue. The paper had another short run about the time of the Harrison campaign, in 1840. It was not partisan politically, but both Whigs and Democrats were given opportunity to air their views in its columns, which opportunity they eagerly took advantage of. James H. Morse & Company, continuing in control of the paper, on May 18, 1841, changed its name to that of the *Grand Rapids Enquirer*. Simeon M. Johnson, an attorney-at-law and a man of considerable ability, was the "Co." in the firm name, and under his editorial management the *Enquirer* became a vigorous exponent of the



political principles advocated by the Democratic party. In February, 1842, Johnson retired and Ezra D. Burr became a half owner and the editor, acting as such until August, 1844. J. H. Morse & Company continued the publication until April 19, 1845, when Mr. Morse died and the paper passed into the hands of his widow, who formed a partnership with Mrs. S. D. Stevens. The feminine firm published the paper for about a year. In November, 1846, the ladies sold out to Jacob Barns & Company, who engaged Charles H. Taylor as editor. Under this new arrangement the paper was published as a weekly until 1855, when a daily edition was added.

Charles H. Taylor, who for a number of years conducted the editorial columns of the Enquirer with such signal ability, was born at Cooperstown, N. Y., Nov. 20, 1813. He came to Grand Rapids in 1836, when there were less than twenty houses in the place, and was a resident until his death, in 1889. He served as county clerk, member of the legislature, asylum commissioner, secretary of state, register of the United States land office in the northern part of this peninsula, postmaster under President Johnson, and as before stated was for many years editor of the Enquirer. He was also a prominent, enterprising business man, in trade and in manufacturing enterprises; active, energetic and persevering until he went down to his last sleep, loved and respected by the community in which he had dwelt more than half a century. He had marked characteristics, and many excellent traits of character.

Alphonso E. Gordon came to Grand Rapids from Brunswick, N. J., and on March 19, 1855, began the publication of the Grand Rapids Daily Herald, the first daily newspaper in the city. Ostensibly it was a neutral paper, as far as politics was concerned, but later came out squarely in support of the Democratic party. It quickly obtained a fair patronage in a community which until then had been supplied with only weekly papers for its local news. Not to be outdone, Jacob Barns & Company, of the old weekly Enquirer, began the publication of a daily issue, Nov. 19, 1855, with Charles H. Taylor as editor. William B. Howe was engaged as city editor, and this marked the era of a new departure in local journalism. Jonathan P. Thompson became its editor in August, 1856. The Daily Enquirer was published under those auspices until May 1, 1857, when A. E. Gordon, of the Herald, purchased it, and consolidated the two papers. For a brief time a semi-weekly was published in connection with the daily Enquirer.

Associated with Mr. Gordon in this enterprise was Jonathan P. Thompson, a political and news writer, and the firm name was Gordon & Thompson. The partnership did not last long, on account of disagreement. The office property was siezed upon a chattel mortgage, and, being carried away by unskilled hands, the type was converted into "pi." Gordon immediately procured a new outfit and the publication of the Enquirer and Herald was continued in spite of financial difficulties. In April, 1860, the plant, good will and subscription list were again taken, under a mortgage, and soon afterward Fordham & Company obtained possession, and continued the publication somewhat irregularly. E. D. Burr succeeded Fordham, and Burr & Titus published the paper, sometimes weekly and sometimes semi-weekly,



until 1865, when Titus became the possessor and transferred it to Merrills H. Clark. The paper had announced the decease of its daily issue about Nov. 21, 1864. Clark assumed control in August, 1865, and, in order to clear up its business complications, changed the name to the Grand Rapids Democrat; and thus ended the troubled history of the Enquirer and Herald.

Merrills H. Clark, in whose proprietorship, in August, 1865, the Democrat was started under a new title, sold an interest in the paper to Richard Burt, of Omaha, Neb. In a short time Burt resold to Clark, whose next partner was Clark C. Sexton. After Sexton, he had associated with him successively, Robert Wilson, H. P. Churchill, John L. E. Kelley, James N. Davis, Charles B. Smith, and Ambrose A. Stevens. On July 29, 1877, Clark sold his interest to Messmore & Stevens, who conducted the paper until May, 1881, when J. E. Messmore became the sole owner, and on Aug. 1, 1882, transferred it to Frank W. Ball. Mr. Ball owned the paper nine years and was succeeded by the late Isaac M. Weston, Jan. 1, 1891. Mr. Weston published the paper until 1897, when it passed to the control of the Grand Rapids Publishing Company, which organization was changed repeatedly in the succeeding five years. In 1902 the name of the paper was changed to the Evening Post, and it was made an evening paper, after occupying the morning field for nearly forty years. A year later William F. McKnight secured a controlling interest and held it until 1904, when he sold to John W. Hunter. The latter secured complete control of the paper, reorganized the company, and on May 1, 1908, changed the name to the Daily News. In May, 1910, Andrew Fyfe took hold of the paper and George A. Murphy became business manager and changed the name to the Grand Rapids News, under which name it is still published. On Jan. 1, 1912, A. P. Johnson gave up his position as advertising manager of the Chicago Record-Herald, purchased the News from Andrew Fyfe, and on May 15 following, Mr. Murphy retired. The history of this first paper established in Kent county would be incomplete without something more than passing mention of the men who piloted it through the breakers of the journalistic sea to its safe anchorage.

Jonathan P. Thompson, who was identified with its publication for a few years, died at Detroit, in 1880. He had been well known as a resident of Grand Rapids, to which place he came in 1856, and engaged as editor of the Enquirer. He was connected with the press here for about four years, after which he went East. About 1868 he returned, and for three or four years was connected with the Eagle, as one of the editorial staff. The remainder of his life was devoted chiefly to the promotion of the interests of horticulture and pomology and upon his death the State Pomological society, which he originated, paid a tribute to his memory, and directed the procuring of his portrait to be placed among its archives.

Simeon M. Johnson, a brilliant young lawyer from Scipio, Cayuga county, New York, was the first editor of the paper after it took the name of Enquirer. Johnson was a handsome fellow—tall, of splendid figure, dark complexion and glossy beard, and dressed exquisitely. He boarded at the National Hotel, then the finest hotel in town, located on the present site of the Morton House. Johnson was a great fel-



low for society and with the ladies he was the most popular man in town. He had been especially sweet on a young lady who lived near the hotel and their intimacy became a breezy part of the gossip of the town. Old Rix Robinson, the first settler, was then a man in the prime of life, and though he lived in Ada he always felt and was recognized as the father of Grand Rapids. Rix took it upon himself to correct Mr. Johnson in his fascination for the young lady. Meeting him on the corner where the People's Savings Bank now stands, Mr. Robinson assaulted Mr. Johnson and kicked him clear across the street. Mr. Johnson had no chance in combat with such an enormous adversary and took his mortifying punishment with the best possible grace. Robinson was noted for his very large hands and feet. A short time afterward the boys, who envied and hated Johnson, got an enormous pair of old boots and sent them to the State Fair, labelled: "These are the boots with which Rix Robinson 'booted' Sim Johnson." Mr. Johnson married a daughter of 'Squire Coggeshall, the pioneer who laid out the first plat of the City of Kent, which was the name first given to Grand Rapids. The 'Squire opposed the "match" and the alliance turned out badly, Mrs. Johnson getting a separation in the courts with the custody of her child. After some months service on the Enquirer, Johnson was to have received a fine appointment at Washington, but his old enemy, Rix Robinson, went to General Cass and induced that old Democratic leader to see that Johnson was not appointed. Johnson then shook the dust of Grand Rapids from his feet and went to Washington, where he soon made a brilliant position for himself. He became the intimate friend of Colonel Forney and other Democratic leaders in Washington and was made managing editor of the paper organized to support Buchanan's administration. Subsequently Johnson went to New York City, where for several years he was managing editor of the New York Herald. This remarkable man died while dining in Delmonico's restaurant, March 1, 1872.

Merrills H. Clark commenced his journalistic career at Owosso, in 1840. In his journal, the Argus, he was the first to propose the name of Lewis Cass to the Democratic party as a candidate for President. Cass was nominated, in 1848, but was beaten at the polls by the Whig candidate. A few years later, Clark moved his business to Corunna, where he remained until 1859, when he sold his interests in that place and moved to Omaha, Neb., where he purchased the Omaha Times and immediately effected a consolidation with the Nebraskan, of that city. Clark started the first daily newspaper between the Mississippi river and the Pacific coast. In the month of July, 1865, he purchased an interest in the Weekly Enquirer, published by Ezra D. Burr and N. D. Titus, in Grand Rapids, and soon afterward resurrected the daily issue, which he called the Daily Democrat. After purchasing the interests of Burr and Titus, he was associated with several partners at different periods, until 1877, when he sold the property to Messmore & Stevens.

The Grand Rapids Eagle began its career on Dec. 25, 1844, under the editorial guidance of Aaron B. Turner, then in his twenty-third year. The Herald of June 11, 1903, contained the following obituary editorial: "The passing of Aaron B. Turner at a ripe old age takes away another link which connects the Grand Rapids of today with that of yesterday. Coming here as a boy of 14, in 1836, this city was



Mr. Turner's home for 67 years, and during all this long period he was an active factor in the city's life and development. He learned the printer's trade in the first newspaper published in the Grand River valley. When he had served his apprenticeship he undertook the publication of a newspaper of his own. The Eagle, which he established in 1844, continued under his management and control for all but one year of a half century, and the files of the paper as he conducted it may be searched in vain for a line that could not be read in the family circle, for a sentiment that was not worthy of the best citizenship, for an expression that was not loyal to Grand Rapids and its best interests. Mr. Turner and the Eagle were one and the same, and Mr. Turner's honesty, sincerity and devotion as reflected in the columns of his paper constituted an important influence in the upbuilding of the city, in the development of the city's industries and resources, and in the encouragement of all that was good. He was essentially one of the builders of Grand Rapids, and his memory will be preserved in the city's annals."

In the publication of the weekly edition, Mr. Turner had associated with him, in 1848, James Scribner. This gentleman, a native of New York City, born in 1801, came to Grand Rapids in the winter of 1836-37, and pre-empted land, which he subsequently purchased, where now is what is known as Scribner's Addition, or the Scribner Plat, on the west side of the river. He was a conspicuous and somewhat eccentric character upon these streets for many years; always had several irons in the fire, and was engaged in pushing some important enterprise, sometimes failing and sometimes successful. He invented a patent medicine which he called Oak Oil. He was one of the leading men in the Grand Rapids & Indiana railroad project, which he did not live to see consummated. He was also connected with the efforts to establish the manufacture of salt, which for a time seemed likely to succeed, but eventually proved unprofitable and was abandoned. He was a jolly and saucy friend, but an implacable enemy. He believed in his Oak Oil, in his city lots, in his railroad enterprises, in salt, and in himself. He was a bustling pioneer, rough and ready and alive, who made his presence known when he was about, and did a good part in the development of the town. Mr. Scribner died in 1862, leaving a warm place in the hearts of a wide circle of friends.

At the beginning of its career the Eagle pledged its support to the Whig party, and it supported that organization faithfully for nine years. After the election of 1852, and the signal defeat of the Whig party thereat, the Eagle astonished the community and many of its patrons, by appearing with the legend at its head: "An Independent Democratic Journal," and declaring that the time had come for a new alignment; that Anti-Slavery Whigs must seek other affiliations, and the Democratic party be opposed by a new organization. It promptly came to the support of the Free Democratic State ticket nominated Feb. 22, 1854. Mr. Turner was secretary of the convention held "under the oaks" at Jackson, at which the Republican party was organized, and his paper, the Grand Rapids Eagle, was the first paper in the United States to espouse and support the cause of the new party.

In the early days of its publication, the founder of the Eagle was also associated with his father, Isaac Turner, a native of Clinton



County, New York, who came from Plattsburgh to Grand Rapids in 1836, with his family. He tarried for a brief time on the east side of the river, and then moved across, making a pre-emption claim on the mission land south of Bridge street; supposing that eventually it would be put in market the same as other public lands by the government. He lived for many years in a small house pleasantly situated a short distance above where now is the west end of Pearl street bridge. He was an excellent millwright, and his handiwork contributed to the erection of many of the earlier mills in this vicinity and on the Muskegon River. In early life he was a Whig, then a Republican, and in religious matters became a firm believer in Spiritualism. He was enthusiastic, earnest and aggressive in support of his convictions, politically and otherwise. He did much, officially, in the early development of the city. A hater of hypocrisy, a contemner of shams, and a citizen of thorough integrity, Isaac Turner was loved and prized as a neighbor, and as a man respected and trusted. He died in 1879 at the age of 78 years.

On May 26, 1856, the Daily Eagle was started as a morning paper. It was changed to an evening paper Sept. 2 of the same year, and with the exception of two or three weeks in December, 1859, it continued as an evening journal during the remainder of its existence. In the Spring of 1859 a power press was added to the equipment. Albert Baxter entered the office in August, 1855, and assisted in the editorial department and as business manager until July, 1860, and from 1865 until July, 1887, he was the political writer and managing editor.

Albert Baxter was born in a log cabin by the bank of Mad River, in Moretown, Washington County, Vermont, Aug. 3, 1823, a son of Eber Hubbard Baxter. In boyhood he attended the district schools, and then for two terms a village academy; afterward taught school in Vermont, and in Wisconsin, whither he went in 1845. In 1846 he came to Grand Rapids and read law for a time, meanwhile working in a carriage shop, following carriage making and painting about seven years. On Feb. 22, 1849, he married Elvira E., daughter of Joel Guild, the first white settler of Grand Rapids. On Feb. 22, 1854, Mr. Baxter was a delegate at the Free Democratic State convention, in Jackson, which first nominated K. S. Bingham for Governor of Michigan. In the summer of 1854 he abandoned his shop and spent the ensuing months in the East, in a fruitless effort to win back health to his invalid wife, but she died at Fayston, Vt., June 5, 1855. In August, 1855, he entered the office of the Grand Rapids Eagle, as business and editorial assistant, and remained until July, 1860, when he went to Detroit and worked a while on the Tribune. For nearly all of the two years following he was in very poor health. In the Fall of 1865, he again entered the Eagle office and occupied the editorial chair for about twenty-two consecutive years, laboring zealously for the public good. After retiring from that position he devoted himself for a time to the preparing of a History of the City of Grand Rapids, which was published in 1891.

Under Mr. Baxter's management the Eagle wielded considerable influence in public matters. As its future looked bright, Mr. Turner erected a home for the Eagle on Lyon street, into which the offices were moved in 1868. Succeeding Mr. Baxter, the editorial writer was Theodore M. Carpenter. On July 15, 1888, a stock company



was formed under the title of the A. B. Turner Company, with A. B. Turner as president, E. B. Fisher vice-president, W. S. Turner secretary, and F. S. Milmine treasurer. Early in 1894 E. N. Dingley, of Kalamazoo, contracted for Mr. Turner's controlling interest. Later, Mr. Fisher, not satisfied with the prospects, sold his interest to Mr. Dingley. A few months later Mr. Dingley's interest in the remnants was sold to another paper and the Eagle, which for forty-eight years greatly molded public opinion and shaped the destinies of Grand Rapids, ceased to exist.

In these days, telegraph lines and long distance telephones, coupled with the ramifications of the Associated Press, make the work of obtaining foreign news an easy matter. It was not so in 1856, when the Enquirer and the Eagle supplied the people of Grand Rapids with the news. At that time the President's message was looked forward to with interest, and the paper that produced it first was regarded as the most enterprising and worthy of patronage.

Young Hickory, a Democratic campaign sheet, was issued from the Enquirer office in 1844.

Wells' Advertiser, a monthly real estate paper, was started in the summer of 1856, by Revilo Wells, associated with whom was Bennett N. Sexton. The Valley City Advertiser, a social and literary monthly, was the successor to Wells' Advertiser, and was published by B. N. Sexton for several years.

The Industrial Journal, a labor weekly, was issued in February, 1867, as the successor of the Valley City Advertiser and Laboring Man's Advocate, by J. B. Haney, agent of the Labor Union Publishing Company. It was afterward published for a short time by John G. Lee. The Grand Rapids Daily Union, a short lived evening labor paper, was issued by the Labor Union Publishing Company, July 30, 1867, with Ezra D. Burr as editor. The Labor Union, a tri-weekly labor paper, was published by John G. Lee in 1868-69.

The Grand Rapids Press, a semi-weekly newspaper, was established by Jonathan P. Thompson and Charles B. Benedict, in 1857, after the dissolution of the firm of Gordon & Thompson, publishers of the Enquirer and Herald.

The Great Western Journal, a weekly newspaper, first called the Grand Rapids Journal, was established by Thomas D. Worrall, in October, 1858. Uri J. Baxter, E. G. D. Holden, and Justus C. Rogers were connected with this paper for a time as editors.

The Young Wolverine, a four-page monthly "young folks' journal," was published one year, from July, 1857, to July, 1858, by Charles W. Eaton and William S. Leffngwell. It was a well edited paper, and has not been surpassed in neatness of typography by any of its successors.

De Stoompost, the first Hollandish paper published in the city, was issued in 1859 by Jacob Quintus, who sold it to Henry D. C. VanAsmus, and it was suspended after an existence of some seven years.

De Vrijheids Banier, a weekly paper in the Holland language, was established in 1868, by Verburg & Van Leeuwen. In November, 1871, it was purchased by James Van der Sluis, who became its editor, and he made it Republican, politically, which it continued to remain until it ceased publication in 1900. Among its editors were John W. Van der Haar, J. Van Leeuwen, H. M. Buhrman, and J.



Scheffer. In 1895 it was purchased by Scheffer & Zuiderveld, and in 1899 it passed to the control of William Ver Burg.

The Grand Rapids City Advertiser, a trade paper of twenty-eight pages, quarto, was issued quarterly throughout 1869, by J. D. Dillenback.

The Sun, a Greenback daily, was published, about 1869-70, by Marvin & Company, but it was short lived.

The first number of the Grand Rapids Daily Times was issued April 17, 1870, by Clark C. Sexton. In 1871 Nathan Church purchased a half interest, and was its editor two or three years. Don Henderson and George W. Gage then held an interest in it for a short time, and afterward in the proprietorship were Myron W. Tarbox, Harry H. Pierce, and John M. Harris. In 1876, Nathan Church resumed control, which he retained as long as the paper was issued. Professedly the Times was an independent journal, politically and otherwise; in fact, it was a sort of free-lance paper, with points turned every way. In its later days, Gouverneur B. Rathbone was interested in it, financially. Upon its staff at times, among others, were Theodore M. Carpenter, F. J. Hobbes, A. B. Tozer, Charles H. Hamblin, and J. G. Hann. It was purchased by Frank W. Ball and merged in the Democrat, July 21, 1886, on which day its last number was issued.

Clark C. Sexton, the editor of the paper from the time it was started until Nathan Church purchased a half interest, was engaged in the newspaper business in Grand Rapids before the Civil War, and was employed at different times on the Eagle and the Democrat. He was a capable news-gatherer, a good solicitor of subscriptions and advertisements, but in business management he proved to be incompetent. After publishing the Times two or three years he sold out his interest in the property, and died a year or two later. He was very kind hearted and had many friends.

Der Pioneer, an independent German weekly paper, and the pioneer German paper of the city, was published in 1871-72, by Carl Nienhardt. It suspended after a life of nearly two years.

The Saturday Evening Post, an eight-page literary newspaper, was founded by D. N. Foster, Oct. 4, 1873, with William M. Hathaway as assistant editor. In 1877, C. H. Dubois acquired control of the property, and in February, 1879, sold it to Creswell & Felker (John A. Creswell and P. H. Felker). In 1880, Charles A. French purchased Mr. Felker's interest. John A. Creswell, who now became editor, was a newspaper man whose sharp, incisive pencil had made his pseudonym of "Cres" well known all over Michigan. The famous "T. T." (Town Talk) column was long remembered. The paper was not a financial success, and in December, 1882, was sold to E. O. Rose, of Big Rapids. Mr. Rose, after some three years' experience, sold it to J. W. Halleck, who made it a Prohibition paper, and the journal breathed its last in the Spring of 1886.

The Valley City Enterprise, a weekly, was started in 1873, by I. Ransom Sanford, and was devoted to the interests of the West Side. It was subsequently published by W. N. Fuller and J. H. Maze, who sold it, in the Fall of 1874, to Carpenter & Garner. It was succeeded by the Independent Press, which was published by the new proprietors as a Spiritualist paper for a few months, in 1874-75.

The Journal of Fashion, a monthly fashion journal, was published in 1873 by J. E. and W. S. Earle.

The Michigan Staats Zeitung, a weekly German newspaper, was established in December, 1874, by William Eichelsdoerfer. The paper was well supported for a time, but suspended after an existence of some ten years.

The Daily Evening News was launched Dec. 3, 1874, by Arthur S. White and W. F. Conant, but it died after a life of five months.

De Wachter, a semi-monthly Hollandish religious newspaper, was established in Holland City, in 1868. It was removed to this city in 1875, and was published for a time by the Rev. G. E. Boer.

De Standaard, a Hollandish paper, was started Jan. 28, 1875, by J. Van Strien and Dennis Schram. It was published as a semi-weekly, in 1877, with Isaac Kerwey as editor. Subsequently, Gerrit Visschers and G. Schoenmaker were editors, and in 1881, Dennis Schram became proprietor with Gerrit Visschers as editor. Mr. Schram continued to publish the paper until 1916, when it became the property of De Standaard Publishing Company. It is Republican in politics.

The Agricultural World, a semi-monthly, whose name indicates its character, was established in 1875 by Frank M. Carroll, and it was merged in the Weekly World in 1886, and that paper suspended publication in 1889.

The Michigan Amateur, an amateur monthly, was published in 1876.

The Evening News Item, a daily, was published by J. D. Dillenback and others in 1876-77.

The Argus, a Greenback afternoon daily, was published in 1876 by Myron W. Tarbox.

The Evening Mail, a co-operative daily, was started in June, 1876, by a company of printers. The co-operation failed to co-operate and after two months it died.

The Grand Rapids Greenback, a weekly, was started by Slocum & Holt, in March, 1877. The paper was run as a weekly some six months, when Holt retired and Slocum made it a daily. It was short lived.

The Evening National was published by R. M. Slocum as a Greenback daily in April, 1878, as a successor to the Grand Rapids Greenback.

The Grand Rapids Sonntags Blaet, a German literary weekly, was established by William Eichelsdoerfer in 1877. It lived about nine years.

The Medical Counsellor, an eight-page medical semi-monthly, was established in 1877 by Dr. Hugo R. Arndt. It was afterward printed in Ann Arbor and edited by Dr. Arndt.

Dawn of the Morning, an organ of the Children of Zion (Adventist), a 16-page monthly, was established in 1878 by D. D. Paterson. It suspended publication in 1889.

The Lever, a weekly Prohibition paper, was founded in this city in 1878 by J. A. Van Fleet. The publication office was afterward removed to Chicago.

De Nieuwsbode, a tri-weekly, independent, Hollandish paper, was published three months, in 1878, by Timothy Haan & Company.



The Standard, a Greenback weekly, was published in the winter of 1878 by Louis Gale, and afterward by W. A. Innes and W. B. Weston. It was afterward merged in the Leader.

The Daily Evening Enquirer, a revival of the Weekly Enquirer, suspended in 1865, was issued in August, 1878, by M. H. Clark. The paper was started as a Democratic organ, but soon changed to Greenbackism. It ran but a few months.

The News and Price Current, a weekly, was published in 1878.

The Diamond, an unsavory weekly, was published in 1879 by Louis Gale.

The Review, a literary weekly, was established in 1879 by A. B. Tozer and Robert Baird. It was sold in 1880 to L. B. Stanton and Joseph P. Ball, and the former, in 1883, changed the name of the paper to the Michigan Trade Journal, and afterward the Michigan Journal, and published it in the interest of the trade in liquors. It was issued on Saturday of each week and its publication was continued until 1896, when its demise was recorded.

The Evening Leader was started by the Leader Publishing Company, Feb. 14, 1879, ostensibly as an independent exponent of what was called "Greenback" or "National" politics. The principal stockholders of the company were Henry S. Smith, C. C. Comstock, William H. Powers, John C. Blanchard, L. V. Moulton, William P. Innes, John L. Curtiss, P. S. Hulbert, and William A. Berkey. Members of its staff were S. B. McCracken, James H. Maze, William B. Weston, and A. W. Johnston. Among those connected with it as editors or reporters were George W. Gage, F. H. Hosford, J. W. Mills, W. R. Maze, Herbert Parrish, W. B. Weston, David R. Waters, Lewis G. Stuart, and Henry M. Rose. Its tone, usually, was that of a supporter of Democratic party politics. W. B. Weston was its proprietor during the last years of its existence. It ceased to exist with the year of 1892 and was merged into the Press.

The Michigan Artisan, an eighty-page monthly mechanical trades journal, was established by Arthur S. White in 1880. It proved to be a flourishing paper and was edited by its founder for many years. It later passed into the hands of a stock company, of which E. B. Fisher was for a time president. Issued semi-monthly in 1901, in 1909 it appeared as a weekly. It continued as such until 1911, since which time it has been published as a daily, during the months of July and January only, under the name of the Daily Artisan Record.

The Michigan School Moderator, an educational monthly, was first issued in this city in 1880. It is now published in Lansing under the name of Moderator-Topics, and occupies a high position among journals of its class.

Society News, a short lived weekly, was published in 1881 by George B. Catlin.

The Truth, a weekly, was published by Benson Bidwell in 1882, in the interests of a Quixotic enterprise, conducted under the name of the Union Trust Company.

The Germania, a Republican German weekly, was established in 1882 by Martin & Wurzburg, with Louis Martin as editor. It was a successful paper and its publication was continued until 1916, when it suspended.

Yankee Dutch, a weekly, printed in Dutch and English and dedicated to American citizens born in Holland, was established in 1882 by John W. Van Leeuwen. It expired in 1890.

The Michigan Tradesman, an eight-page commercial weekly, was established in 1883 by Ernest A. Stowe, who still continues as its editor. It is issued on Wednesdays and has attained a high standing. The Tradesman Company are the publishers.

The Michigan Dairyman, a sixteen-page monthly, whose interests are chiefly indicated by its title, was established in 1886 by E. A. Stowe & Brother, and issued from the Tradesman office. In 1892 the name of the publication was changed to American Cheesemaker.

The Saturday Evening Herald, a weekly, was published in March, 1883, by H. A. Brooks.

The Clipper, a weekly, was published in 1883, at 46 old Canal street, by Charles S. Gates.

The Daily Sun, an independent afternoon paper, was published for eight months of 1883 by W. F. Cornell and E. A. Hoag.

The Boycotter, a small weekly, was printed in 1883 by Hufford & Randall, backed by the Typographical Union. Its existence was ephemeral.

The Labor Union, a weekly labor paper, was run for four months of 1884 by Asa Barrows, David Hufford and Paul Randall, as a successor to the Boycotter, and it was published for a short time under the title of Labor Herald, by T. J. Mosher.

Our Mutual Friend, a monthly, was published in 1883 by J. G. Beecher.

The German-American, a small weekly sheet, was started in 1884 by Herman Hammerschlag. It was devoted to the interests of Hebrew German-Americans. Later, its name was changed to that of Progressive Age, and it became a radical and aggressive free-thought paper.

The Workman, a four-page Knights of Labor weekly, was established in 1884 by I. S. Dygert, with E. D. Fuller as editor. William M. Hathaway was afterward editor for a time and it was later published by E. P. Mills and A. M. Wolihan. The Workman suspended publication in 1898, when it was purchased by W. B. Weston, from Mills & Leonard and the name was changed to the Chronicle. It was published from the Herald Building.

The Wolverine Cyclone, a political and humorous weekly, was started in 1884 by J. Mason Reynolds. It was still issued occasionally as late as 1889, but finally discontinued publication entirely.

Hearth and Hall, a sixteen-page literary monthly, was founded in 1884 by Theodore M. Carpenter and Edgar J. Adams. It had offices in the Eagle Building and was an excellent household journal, but it went the way of all the earth, in 1896, having passed into the hands of C. S. Reeves in 1895.

The Morning Telegram was first issued Sept. 30, 1884, by Harford & McDowell (W. M. Harford and Hugh McDowell), as a Republican journal. On Jan. 21, 1885, The Telegram Publishing Company was organized, and among its principal stockholders were A. B. Watson, D. A. Blodgett, Henry Spring, N. L. Avery, Hon. M. S. Crosby, and C. G. Swensberg. Harford & McDowell, however, held



the controlling interest until April 17, 1886, when it was sold to Lloyd Brezee and Fred G. Berger. On May 20, 1885, Lloyd Brezee started Brezee's Herald, a weekly society paper, which was published about eleven months. When Brezee & Berger acquired control of the Morning Telegram, Brezee's Herald and the Telegram were consolidated under the title of Telegram-Herald, and the proprietors added a Sunday morning edition devoted chiefly to society matters, to take the place of Brezee's weekly. Brezee's name appeared as editor and proprietor, and the paper was declared independent in politics. On Aug. 3, 1888, E. D. Conger, with the financial backing of C. G. Swensberg, purchased the interest of Brezee & Berger, thus securing control of the paper, and turned the majority of stock thus purchased over to Swensberg. Under the new management the paper was made Republican in politics and secured a fair degree of patronage. C. G. Swensberg was president of the company, and E. D. Conger, secretary and manager. On its staff have been Hugh McDowell, F. W. Boughton, Ed. E. Smith, Mrs. Etta S. Wilson, W. A. Innes, H. M. Rose, J. D. McIntyre, W. J. Sproat, Charles Hamblin, W. C. Graves, Herbert Parrish, Melnot Grummond, Charles Young, Charles Emerson, James Ferguson, Lewis M. Miller, Thomas K. Hunt, Bert Hall, Horace Cambron, A. S. Hopkins, the Rev. S. H. Woodford, George B. Catlin, S. H. Sweet, Charles P. Woodward, J. Emery, Will Conger, L. G. Stuart, W. Frank Knox, and W. H. Turner. On the death of C. G. Swensberg, E. D. Conger obtained a controlling interest in the paper and was its proprietor until April 2, 1905, when the control of the publication was purchased by Ralph Booth, who conducted it until March 17, 1906, when it passed into the hands of William Alden Smith. The Herald is considered the leading Republican paper of Western Michigan.

The West Side News, an eight-page weekly newspaper, was started in 1886. It was devoted especially to the interests of the west side of the river, and John G. Lee was editor and publisher. It suspended publication in 1893.

The Boy in Blue, an organ of the Sons of Veterans, was published in 1886 by T. J. Mosher. It was succeeded by the Michigan Soldier, a Grand Army and Sons of Veterans organ, also published by Mr. Mosher, but afterward sold to Eugene Carpenter, in whose hands it died, in 1888.

The School Newspaper, an educational weekly, was published in 1883-84 by the School Newspaper Company.

Nieuwe Courant, a weekly Holland paper, was published in 1884 by Jacob Quintus.

York's Musical Journal, an eight-page monthly musical journal, was established in 1884 by J. W. York & Son.

The Globe, a literary weekly, was published in 1882-84 by Godwin & Adzit and F. Homer Hosford. It was later merged in the Daily Times.

The Radical, a weekly, devoted to radical Democracy, was started Feb. 16, 1884, by W. J. Sproat. It was sold to F. W. Ball and merged in the Democrat in September following.

The Critique, a weekly journal, was issued in 1885 by the Dawn Publishing Company.

The Message, a small sheet, was published in 1885-86 by the South Congregational Church, and was devoted to the church's interest.

The Michigan Manufacturer, a small sixteen-page monthly, was published in 1885 by E. A. Stowe & Brother. It lived one year.

The Land Journal, a monthly real estate paper, was published by A. A. Root & Company in 1886.

Tozer's Saturday Mail, a literary weekly, lived through two issues which were published by A. B. Tozer, in December, 1886.

The Michigan Building and Real Estate Journal, a monthly, was published by Harford & Altschwager, with W. M. Harford as editor, in 1886.

The Evening News, a short-lived daily, was issued in 1886 by the Evening News Publishing Company (Paul Randall and others).

The Real Estate World, a monthly real estate journal, was published by C. S. Edwards in 1886.

The Germ, a Prohibition weekly, was published in 1886 by the Rev. George Candee. It was afterward merged in the Center, at Lansing, Mich.

The High School Journal, a monthly school paper, was published by the High School Lyceum throughout the school year, 1886-87.

The Sunday News, a weekly, was published in November, 1886, by W. J. Mather, of Toronto, Canada. Its life was but a span—two issues in length.

The Sunday Tribune was the title of a weekly, three issues of which were published in 1886 by one Roberts.

Common Sense, a radical free-thought weekly, was published in 1887 by A. C. Everett.

The Baptist Record, a four-page religious monthly, was published in 1887-88, by the Young People's League of the First Baptist Church.

The Deltan, a school magazine, organ of the Gramma Delta Psi fraternity, was published in the High School in 1887-88.

The Rector's Assistant, an ably edited monthly, devoted to the interests of St. Paul's parish, was published by the Rector, Rev. J. Rice Taylor, in 1887-88.

The Monthly Bulletin, a small sheet, was published in 1886-87 by the Y. M. C. A., in the interests of the Association.

Your Paper, a monthly, was published in 1887 by Carpenter & Adams, proprietors of Hearth and Hall.

Svenska Veckobladet, a Swedish weekly, was published in 1887 by C. A. Wickstrom.

The Agitator, a weekly, was published in 1887 by Alfred Rindge.

The Business Reporter, a daily, was published for two months in 1887 by W. A. Innes and E. A. Antidel.

Der Sonntagsbote, a German literary weekly, was established in 1887. Martin & Wurzburg were the publishers and it was issued from the Germania office until 1916, when its publication was suspended.

The Christian Messenger, an independent evangelical weekly, was started in 1888 by E. B. Gifford, as editor, but it existed only a short time.



The Christian Helper, a four-page monthly, was started in December, 1888, in the interest of the Second Baptist Church, by the Rev. Edward H. Brooks. Its life was also short.

Skriftens-Tolk, a Swedish monthly, devoted to "true religion and politics," was first issued Jan. 5, 1889, from an office on Broadway by the Swedish Publishing Company, of which C. A. Wickstrom was president. It suspended after a short time.

Gage's Saturday Gazette, a literary weekly, was started Sept. 8, 1888, by the Gage Brothers. George W. Gage was editor and Hiram R. Gage was publisher. The paper was merged in Hobbies, another publication of the same style which was started Jan. 10, 1889, by C. S. Hartman, with F. D. Hopkins as associate editor. Hobbies afterward passed into the hands of M. A. True and F. D. Hopkins, and its name was changed to Town News. It soon suspended publication.

The Star, an eight-page weekly journal, "of society, dramatic, sporting, club and general news," was started Feb. 9, 1889, with W. A. Emerson as publisher and C. S. Emerson as editor, but it lived only a short time.

The Tyler, devoted to Freemasonry and official organ of the craft in Michigan, was published for a time in Grand Rapids, about 1890.

De Banier Des Volks, a Republican, Hollandish weekly, was published for three months in the fall of 1888 by Van Houtum & De Haan.

On the first Monday morning of September, 1890, the first number of the Morning Press was issued. William J. Sproat was its founder, and it ran under his proprietorship till Nov. 5, 1891, when the Press Publishing Company was organized. Among its members were D. R. Waters, William J. Sproat, Charles K. Gibson, E. F. Doty, E. L. Briggs, Charles E. Emerson, A. A. Weeks and A. A. Ellis. Soon afterward a controlling interest was purchased by George Booth, who also purchased the Evening Leader. The two were consolidated and made an evening paper Jan. 1, 1893. Less than two years afterward the Evening Press had the afternoon field to itself and for many years it was not only the leading but the only evening paper in the city. It has always been independent in politics. It was first published from 63 Pearl street, and for many years it occupied a building on the river bank at the east end of the Pearl street bridge. In the summer of 1906 it was removed to the Press Building at the corner of East Fulton street and Sheldon avenue, at the head of Monroe street. Edwin W. Booth is the editor and manager.

The Grand Rapids Furniture Record was established in June, 1900. It is a leading furniture journal of the country and maintains a high-grade artistic standard. It is published monthly by the Periodical Publishing Company, with J. Newton Nind as editor.

In addition to those already mentioned, the following publications are issued regularly in the city of Grand Rapids:

The Banner, at 429 Fourth National Bank Building; published every Thursday; Rev. Henry Beets, editor; Jacob Buiten, Jr., business manager.

The Bulletin, at 207½ Monroe avenue; published every Saturday by the Bulletin Printing Company; Martinus Berghege, editor.

The Creston News, at 1519 Plainfield avenue; Adrian Nagelkirk, publisher.

De Huisvriend (Holland), at 447 South Division avenue; H. H. D. Langereis, publisher.

De Wachter (Holland), at 429 Fourth National Bank Building; published weekly on Wednesday; Jacob Buiten, Jr., business manager.

Echo Tygodniowe (Polish weekly), at 704 Bridge street; the Echo Publishing Company, publishers.

The Fruit Belt, published monthly by the Fruit Belt Publishing Company, at 201-202 Murray Building.

The Furniture Manufacturer and Artisan, at 10-19 Perkins Building, 28-32 Pearl street; published monthly by the Periodical Publishing Company, with J. Newton Nind as editor.

Glad Tidings, at 519 Ottawa avenue; E. K. Evans, editor.

Good Furniture, at 215-225 Ellsworth avenue; published monthly by the Dean-Hicks Company, with Henry W. Frohne as editor.

Het Ideaal (Holland), at 447 South Division avenue; H. H. D. Langereis, publisher.

The Holland Farmer, at 447 South Division avenue; H. H. D. Langereis, publisher.

The Holland Home News, at 1450 East Fulton street; monthly; Justus C. Hertstein, editor.

The Mechanical Digest, at 422 Livingston avenue; published monthly by John Brechting.

The New Era Bulletin, second floor of the Grand Rapids Savings Building; published monthly by the New Era Association.

The Northwestern Weekly, at 522 Leonard street; Andrew Van Ysseldyke, publisher.

The Observer, at 112 Louis street; published weekly by the Taylor Printing and Publishing Company, with Claude O. Taylor as editor.

The Record, at 863 Grandville avenue; published weekly by W. S. Stevens.

The Sixth Ward News, at 1021 Tamarack avenue; published weekly by Dick De Bruyn.

The South End Weekly Sun, at 1221 Madison avenue; Mattason & Cook, publishers.

The Times, at 12-14 West Fulton street; Ethel M. Jenkins, editor.

The United Weeklies, at 59-63 Market avenue; published every Wednesday by the United Weekly Press Association.

The Western Undertaker, at 10-19 Perkins Building, 28-32 Pearl street; published monthly by the Periodical Publishing Company, with J. Newton Nind as editor.

Several papers are published in the county outside of the city of Grand Rapids. At Alto, a little village on the Pere Marquette Railroad, southeast of the city, the Solo, a weekly devoted to local news, was established in 1903. It is now (1918) edited by George C. Higdon. The Caledonia News, a weekly paper published every Thursday and edited by Mrs. E. C. Apsey, was established in 1885. The Casnovia Herald, a weekly published every Friday, was established in 1878 and is edited by F. E. Ackerman. The Cedar Springs Clip-



per was established by L. McKnight Sellers, who has continuously published it since then. The Cedar Springs Liberal, a weekly independent paper, was established in 1890 and is now edited by G. A. Link. The Star, an independent weekly in the suburban village of Grandville, was established in 1907, and is now edited and published by Charles F. Gee. In 1912 the Kent City News, a weekly Republican paper, was established. It is now published by the News Publishing Company. At Lowell is published the Journal and also the Ledger, the former of which was established in 1865 and the latter in 1893. J. M. Hutchinson is the editor of the former and Frank M. Johnson of the latter. The Rockford Register was established in 1871 and is published by H. A. Van Antwerp; the Sand Lake Herald was established in 1908 and is edited by J. Quinn Rounds, and the Sparta Sentinel-Leader was established in 1876, being now published by the Sentinel-Leader Publishing Company.

### LITERATURE.

Grand Rapids' purely literary activity has not been so great as her activity in the production of newspapers. But the pursuit of polite literature in Grand Rapids, while desultory as a rule, has been by no means neglected. Probably the first book written by a person long time resident in Grand Rapids was published in the city of Buffalo in 1843, and it consisted of Letters from Van Dieman's Land, written during four years' imprisonment for political offenses committed in Upper Canada, by Benjamin Wait. The volume embodied, also, letters descriptive of personal appeals in behalf of her husband and his fellow prisoners, to the Earl of Durham, Queen Victoria and the United Legislature of the Canadas, by Mrs. Wait. The offenses of which Mr. Wait was convicted consisted in taking part in a general uprising of Canadians against taxation without representation, destruction of the liberty of the press, a bribed judiciary, waste of public revenues, illegal distribution of public lands, an established church, and many other things opposed to the common good of the country. Mr. Wait had made his way to Conneaut, Ohio, but returned to Canada, where he was captured and indicted for high treason. With three others he was condemned to death, but was afterward sent to Van Dieman's Land. He escaped from his banishment after serving four years, during which time his wife made every possible effort to secure his release. He made his way to America on a sailing vessel, the trip requiring seven months. He settled in the East, and in 1843 wrote his book. He located in Michigan in 1870, and was prominently identified with the machinery and lumber business, having been associated here with the Blodgetts. He died at the U. B. A. Home in this city, Nov. 9, 1895, at the advanced age of more than eighty years.

In 1852 a little book entitled The Mormons, or Latter-Day Saints, in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, made its appearance, with Lieut. J. W. Gunnison as author. It gave a history of the rise and progress of the Mormons, their peculiar doctrines, condition and prospects, derived from personal observations during a residence among them. Lieut. Gunnison was born in Goshen, N. H., Nov. 10, 1812. He graduated at West Point, in 1835, and was appointed lieutenant in the United States artillery. In 1841 he married Martha Delony, of Georgia,



and between that time and 1849 was in the topographical department of the regular army, engaged in the coast survey of the Great Lakes. In 1844 he entered a tract of land south of West Fulton street, and made Grand Rapids his family home. After 1849 he was engaged in the topographic survey of the basin of the Great Salt Lake, Utah, where, on Sevier River, Oct. 26, 1853, he was killed by a party of Pah-Ute Indians. He was greatly beloved, and his death was sincerely mourned in this city. One who was with him, in 1844, surveying the region of the Straits of Mackinac, expressed the opinion that his slayers were Mormons disguised as Indians, and he described Lieutenant Gunnison as tall in stature, slim and active, talented, energetic and enterprising, and a worker who frequently tired out the others of his party. Gunnison river was named in his honor.

Grand Rapids has produced her due proportion of historical writers. In 1856 a Business Directory of the City of Grand Rapids was published, containing the firm and individual names of the principal business firms, and men of the place, and also many of their business cards. It was compiled and published by W. A. Robinson. Among others may be mentioned Jackson D. Dillenback's "History and Directory of Kent County," issued in 1870, and Prof. Franklin Everett's "Memorials of the Grand River Valley," a larger and more comprehensive volume, of about 600 pages, printed in 1878. A "History of Kent County," a book ponderous in size but not remarkable for its general accuracy, was published in 1881 by M. A. Leeson as historian, and C. C. Chapman & Company as publishers, neither of whom ever lived in Grand Rapids. Beginning in 1870, Isaac H. Parrish wrote a series of some seventy articles, entitled: "History of Parties," which were published in the Grand Rapids Eagle in the following two years. Again, in 1886-87, he contributed to the West Michigan Farmers' Club a series of papers on "Law for the Farmers." About 1870, Herbert E. Dewey contributed to the press a series of fifteen long articles on "Southern Prisons," with which he was made somewhat acquainted during the Civil War.

The Kent Scientific Institute, among its other means for the spread of knowledge, has issued scientific pamphlets from time to time. In 1873, N. Coleman, a member, compiled under its auspices a list of the flowering plants of the Southern Peninsula of Michigan, including some 725 species. This list has been used extensively in later compilations of Michigan flora. A. O. Currier prepared some valuable lists of Michigan shells, and Dr. William H. DeCamp published a "Monogram on the Mollusks of Michigan."

William A. Berkey, in 1876, issued a book of 384 pages, entitled "The Money Question," a work indicating much labor and research. Three editions of it were published. 1879, D. Darwin and Walter H. Hughes published a genealogical work on the "Hughes and Allied Families."

In 1880, Luther V. Moulton published a volume of 271 pages, entitled, "The Science of Money," and "American Finances," wherein he revels in mathematics, tables of figures and abstruse speculations.

The Rev. P. Moerdyke, D. D., in 1880 published a historical discourse, giving an account of the origin and progress of the First Reformed Church until it became self-supporting, in 1879, and a sermon



to the young. Prof. Vos, Ph. D., issued a volume of some merit on "The Pentateuch," designed as a defense against recent criticisms. The Rev. Samuel Graves published the sermon preached at the dedication of the Fountain Street Baptist Church, and one commemorating his fifteen-year pastorate of that church. The Rev. A. R. Merriman, in 1888, published "A Study of the Divorce Problem."

Among medical works produced by Grand Rapids physicians, is a small treatise on "Homeopathic Treatment of Diphtheria," published in 1880 by Dr. DeForest Hunt. A work on "Phthisis Pulmonaris" was published a year or two later by Dr. G. N. Brigham, of the Homeopathic School, who was also the author of one or two other treatises regarded as standard medical works. Dr. Charles J. Hempel was an author and translator of national repute in the line of Homeopathic medical literature.

Among theological works, the Coming Age Publishing Company in 1887 issued a pamphlet on the "Higher Teachings of Spiritualism." In 1886 the Rev. S. H. Cobb prepared a paper on "The Philosophy and Theology of the Mind Cure," which was published in pamphlet form. The Rev. Kerr B. Tupper edited a volume entitled "Robertson's Living Thoughts," consisting of selections from the sermons of Frederick W. Robertson, a famous divine of Brighton, England. The First Congregational Church Society issued, in 1884, a beautiful memorial volume in relation to the life, services and death of its pastor, the Rev. J. Morgan Smith. In 1881, Bishop D. D. Paterson, of the Children of Zion Church, published a small work entitled "A Casket of Poetical Treasures," original and selected, and in 1883, he published a volume entitled, "Zion's Waymarks, or Knowledge vs. Mystery."

In regard to newspaper contributions, the poems and the rich, though sometimes coarse, humor of J. Mason Reynolds ("Farmer Reynolds"), should not be ignored. In 1882 he published a collection of his poems—a pamphlet of 99 pages. In 1885, A. A. Crozier published a small volume entitled, "The Modification of Plants by Climate." In 1886, Angie B. Gilbert published her poem, "Devil's Kitchen, Mackinaw Island," and in 1897, "A Tale of Two Cities," from her pen, appeared. In 1887, L. L. Shaw published a volume on "The Industries of Grand Rapids," her relations as a center of trade, business houses and manufacturing establishments.

I. M. Weston, in 1889, published a small volume containing his "Documents and Addresses while Mayor of Grand Rapids." Georgie Young, who became intensely earnest in efforts for the relief and reclamation of fallen women, in 1889, published a volume of 116 pages, entitled, "A Magdalen's Life," which awakened great interest in the cause for which it was written. In 1889, F. M. Kendall published a volume entitled, "Michigan: Its Geography, History, Resources, and Civil Government."

In 1890 appeared "Forging His Chains," the autobiography of George Bidwell, the famous ticket-of-leave man—his trial and incarceration in English prisons fourteen years on a life sentence for "the \$5,000,000 forgery on the Bank of England." This book aroused local interest because of the fact that the author, George Bidwell, who successfully worked a forgery upon the Bank of England, was an early resident of Grand Rapids. In December, 1849, Austin B. Bid-



well and his two sons, George and Austin, opened a small shop for the manufacture of candies between Ottawa and Ionia streets, on the north side of Monroe. Subsequently the business was removed to Pearl street, near where is the entrance to the Arcade. Soon afterward the place was destroyed by fire. The young men then moved to the east side of old Canal street, between Lyon and Crescent streets, where they operated for a few years. They built up a large trade and had the best establishment of the kind then in this part of the country, but they left Grand Rapids, and their subsequent history is given in the book, "Forging His Chains."

In 1891 appeared Stanton's U. S. Lawyer's Diary and Rule Book for Michigan, and in the same year Gerrit Berkhof published his "Zwanezang; of Laatste leerrede over 2 Timotheus 4:7, 8."

A number of miscellaneous works of a historical nature have been produced in Grand Rapids. In 1892 B. M. Cutcheon published "Fifty Years of Growth in Michigan," the same being an address which he delivered before the Michigan State Congregational Association at its annual meeting held in Jackson on May 19 of that year. And Mary E. Hardy has won especial distinction. In 1894 she published "Three Singers," and ten years later "Sea Stories for Wonder Eyes" appeared. This was followed in 1912 by "The Hall of Shells" and "The Little King and the Princess True," while perhaps the most popular of her works, "Little Ta-wish: Indian Legends from Geyserland," appeared in 1914.

Several Grand Rapids men have added their contributions to the political and economic literature of the country. Among these have been Charles Hōwell, who in 1895 published "Civilized Money: the Way to Prosperity, Happiness, Civilization." The following year he published a volume on the industrial advantages of Grand Rapids, together with an account of its material development and progress and a series of descriptive sketches of representative business enterprises. Eleanor W. Willard is a favorite among lovers of the style of literature which she produces. In 1895 she published "Children's Singing Games," and in 1904 appeared "The Children's Garden," with illustrations from photographs by Fedora E. D. Brown. A year later she published "A Youngster in the Old World," with photographic illustrations, and following came "Children of Holland," in 1908; "A Spanish Picture Book," in 1909, and "Street Life in North Africa," in 1910. At a meeting of the Michigan Political Science Association, held in Grand Rapids, April 3 and 4, 1896, L. G. Stuart made a valuable contribution to historical literature in a paper entitled, "Verdict for Michigan: How the Upper Peninsula Became a Part of Michigan." An address which has been preserved was given by William Widdicomb at the banquet given by the Grand Rapids Board of Trade in commemoration of the semi-centennial anniversary of the incorporation of Grand Rapids as a city, held in 1900. Mr. Widdicomb is also the author of a treatise upon "The Mahogany Tree: a Brief Historical View and Consideration of Its Present Usefulness," published in 1907.

In 1900, M. R. K. Wright published "The Moral Aphorisms and Terseological Teachings of Confucius, the Sapient Chinese Philosopher," to which is added a correct likeness of the great philosopher and a sketch of his life. In the same year G. W. Abell published



"Flowers of the Heart," for the home, and Loraine P. Immen published "Art's Tribute to Shakespeare." Subsequently, the latter, in 1907, issued "1907-1912: Jeweled Years." In that year also there was published a series of sermons on the distinctive principles of the great historic church movements, by the representative pastors of Grand Rapids. In 1901 A. T. Thoits issued a pretty souvenir of the Grand Rapids Board of Trade outing, held on Oct. 3 of that year. The Rev. A. W. Wishart, in 1902, published a small volume under the title, "A Short History of Monks and Monasteries," and this was followed, in 1908, by "Mind and Body," and in 1910 by "The Social Mission of the Church," published for the social service commission of the Northern Baptist convention. In 1902-04 Henry Beets and M. J. Bosma issued a series of Catechetical books, and in 1904, a "Compendium of the Christian Religion for Those Who Intend to Approach the Holy Supper of the Lord." In 1902, G. W. Thayer published "From Vermont to Lake Superior, in 1845," the same being a personal narrative, delivered before the Old Residents' Association of the Grand River Valley, on June 26 of that year. In 1903, Geert Gingham published a work under the title, "Think Aright; or, Cosmo-planetary: Celestial Harmonic Science Boiled Down," in two volumes. J. H. Randall published a series of sermons, in 1904-05, and in 1911 "A New Philosophy of Life," came from his pen, followed, in 1912, by "The Culture of Personality," and in 1915, by "Humanity at the Cross Roads."

In 1905, C. W. Garfield delivered an address, which has been preserved, before the Grand River Horticultural Society. It is entitled "Private Rights, How They Are Invaded by Unthinking People." In the same year Charles Edwin Patterson delivered addresses before a class in advanced thought. "A Knowledge of the Self the Key to Power" was given in a series of three lectures: The Creation, and the New Dispensation; the Gift of the Spirit and Soul Individualization; and the Building of the Body and Elemental Forces. The other subject was, "What Should I Do That I Would Be What the Almighty Designed." This was also divided into three lectures as follows: Candidates for Initiation; Man's Duty; and Why Should I Preserve My Body, and How May I? In 1906, G. A. Wolf published a booklet entitled "Against Revision," which consisted of reasons advanced for considering the present State constitution adequate. In the same year Daniel McCoy published "Old Fort St. Joseph; or, Michigan Under Four Flags," which was delivered before the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society at its thirty-second annual meeting. In 1907 W. A. Tateum published "Before the Blazing Back Log," which consists of little tales of the woods, fields and waters. The "Exposition of Reformed Doctrine: a Popular Explanation of the Most Essential Teachings of the Reformed Churches," was published by M. J. Bosma in 1907. E. R. Shaw, in 1909, published "Stories of Hell's Commerce; or, the Liquor Traffic in Its True Light"; the volume being a compilation of interesting stories, true incidents, striking illustrations, pointed paragraphs, poetry and song, portraying the evils of the rum curse, as related by John G. Wooley, John P. St. John, Eli Perkins, and many others. In 1912, Mr. Shaw published another volume under title of "The Man of Galilee," which is a short sketch of Christ's three years of ministry.



Henry Beets, in 1909, published a volume on "Abraham Lincoln," in Holland text, and in 1912 he compiled a volume entitled "Thinking on God's Loving Kindness," issuing it as a souvenir of the quarter centennial celebration of the Lagrave Street Christian Reformed Church. Mr. Beets has also translated the "Primer of Reformed Doctrines for Catechetical Classes," and is the author of some works in the Holland language. In 1909, Thomas Benjamin & Son compiled a pictorial volume, called "A Hundred Homes," showing homes of various designs actually built by twenty-five leading architects in different localities. E. W. Bishop has published a collection of sermons, covering the years 1909-11. Myrtle K. Cherryman, in 1909, issued a little volume, called "Mother Goose Meddlings," and in 1916, "Rhymes for Rainy Days," from her pen, was published. In 1909, G. H. Davidson published a "Building Inspector's Hand Book of Grand Rapids," containing the building laws, plumbing and sewerage laws, rules and regulations, mechanics' lien laws, electric laws, rules and suggestions, glossary of electric terms, steam boilers and steam engineers' laws, rules, etc. It is a complete hand-book for architects, and any who are engaged in the erection of buildings; and it contains a directory of architects, contractors, and builders. W. H. Elson and Christine M. Keck published the Elson Grammar School Fourth Reader, for the Eighth grade, in 1909, and later issued the Elson Grammar School Reader.

J. W. Evarts, in 1909, issued a volume, entitled, "Light of Life, Mystery Unveiled by a Personal Visit of Christ: Science Brings Revolution and Law." In the same year, Walter Benjamin Hadley published a pleasing volume with the title, "Selections of Harmony for the Cheerful or Sad." Cornelia S. Hulst, in 1909, published "St. George of Cappadocia in Legend and History," and in 1912 gave to the reading public her "Indian Sketches: Pere Marquette and the Last of the Pottawatomie Chiefs." Mrs. Hulst also contributed "Social and Civic Ethics from the Standpoint of the Chosen Vocation," which was published in a volume issued by J. B. Davis, in 1914, under the title of "Vocational and Moral Guidance." Other contributors to this volume were Mary N. Eaton, "Teaching Vocational Guidance in the Seventh and Eighth Grades"; Carrie R. Heaton, "Preparation for a Vocation and Vocational Ethics"; Mary E. Murphy, "Choosing a Vocation"; Anna E. Workman, "The World's Work: a Study of Vocations"; and Martha E. Clay, "Essentials of Character that Make for Success in Life." In 1910, Clara J. Denton published "Holiday Facts and Fancies," a pleasing little volume giving full yet simple explanations of the American holidays, and in the same year J. A. Heasley published "A Summer Vacation in the Yellowstone National Park." Mrs. Hogue Stinchcomb, in 1910, published a very creditable "History of the Ladies' Literary Club of Grand Rapids," and Belle M. Tower gave to the reading public "The True History of Fulton Street Park," which contribution was written for Sophie De Marsac Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. In 1911, E. W. Booth published a "Survey of the Charities and Philanthropies of Grand Rapids." Johannes Broene, in 1910, published "The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche," which is a dissertation submitted to the faculty of Clark University, at Worcester, Mass. In 1913, Mr. Broene pub-



lished "Some Current Educational Ideals," and in 1917 "The Man Luther" appeared from his pen.

Viva Flaherty, in 1911, published a "History of the Grand Rapids Furniture Strike, with Facts Hitherto Unpublished," and in the same year, Maude Fuller issued a "Course of Lessons in Domestic Science, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Department of Manual Training." A. P. Johnson published a "Library of Advertising," to which A. H. Vandenberg contributed an article on "Psychological Salesmanship as Applied to the Selling of Advertising and Advertised Goods." Arthur Kirkpatrick published "The Four Original Sources of Inspiration for Designs of Furniture," and in the same year (1911) I. N. McCormick published a sermon, entitled "Hitherto," Stewart Edward White published "The Cabin," and in 1912 "The Sign at Six," and in 1913 he published three volumes—"African Camp Fires," "Blazed Trail Stories, and Stories of the Wild Life," and "Gold." In 1915 he gave "The Gray Dawn" to the public. In 1912, Tieman De Vries published "Dutch History, Art and Literature for Americans," which consisted of lectures given in the University of Chicago, and the same year he published "The Influence of the Nations of Europe, Especially of the Netherlands, on the Character, the Institutions and the Development of the American Nation." This was an inaugural address delivered on Tuesday, Oct. 15, 1911, in the University of Chicago. In 1913, Mr. De Vries published "What the House of Orange Has Done for America," and in 1916, "Holland's Influence on English Language and Literature," appeared from his pen.

W. H. Elson, in 1912, published the "Elson Primary School Reader," and Sarah A. Jenison issued "David Erenberg, Healer." W. L. Kimerly published a volume on "How to Know Period Styles in Furniture," the contents being a brief history of furniture from the days of ancient Egypt to the present time, illustrated with over 300 typical examples and a brief description of each period. G. A. Murphy issued a little volume under the title of "Seedlings," consisting principally of epigrams, and "The Use of the Library in the Grades" was reprinted from the Library Journal, of April, 1912. This article was from the pen of Eleanor V. Rawlinson. In this same year (1912) J. A. Schmitt published a little volume on "How to Get Married," and as evidence of the popularity of the subject and the entertaining style in which it was treated, it may be stated that the little volume soon reached its third edition. E. M. Treusch compiled a volume called "Charter Clippings," which consisted of a careful compilation of all newspaper comments on the proposed new charter, from Jan. 3 to Feb. 26, 1912. In 1913, Ida P. Tubbs issued a little volume which she was pleased to denominate "A Book of Poems." O. H. L. Wernicke published his "Penology," consisting of an address delivered to the Class in Applied Christianity, in the Fountain Street Baptist Church, Oct. 27, 1912. Ethelyn Abbott published her "Folk Tales from Grimm," a dramatic reader for the Third and Fourth grades. In this year, also, Louis Berkhof published "The Church and Social Problems," followed in 1914 by "Paul, the Missionary," in 1915 by "New Testament Introduction, or Special Canonics," and in 1916 by "The Christian Laborer in the Industrial Struggle," all from Mr. Berkhof's pen.

B. H. Dean, in 1913, published "The Awakening of Steve Randall," which is the story of a run-down furniture store and how it was rejuvenated. In this year, also, the "Autobiography" of H. W. Dudley, a native of Grand Rapids, but long a prominent business man of Chicago, was published. Ate Dykstra published his "Education in Grand Rapids Outside of the Public School System," which was read on Sunday, March 2, 1913, to the class in Religion and Life of All Soul's Church. A volume on "The Origin of Life, a Girl's Physiology," by Grace Frances Ellis, was published in 1913, and C. C. Fraser published "Every Boy's Book of Handicraft, Sports and Amusements," which consisted of worth-while plans for the general activities of the modern boy, be he handy or unhandy. In this same year (1913) Isaiah Skeels published "Cost and Price; or, the Product and the Market," an analysis of the nature of costs and an inquiry into the origin of purchasing power and credits, showing their limit in paying the price of products and the ever increasing necessity for municipal and industrial bond issues. In 1914, William Bode published "The Book of Job and the Solution of the Problem of Suffering It Offers," and he is also the author of a volume in Holland text. R. B. Kuiper published a volume on "Christian Liberty," in 1914. G. H. Allen, in 1915, published a work on "The Great War," and D. M. Canright issued a volume on "The Lord's Day, from Neither Catholics nor Pagans," an answer to Seventh Day Adventism on this subject. D. R. Freeman issued a volume with the title of "God and War," an exposition of the principles underlying creative peace, and Carl M. Holt published "The Story of Grand Rapids."

W. K. Schmidt, in 1916, published a volume on "Problems of the Finishing Room," intending it to be a reference and formula manual for furniture finishers, woodworkers, builders, interior decorators, manual training departments, etc. F. M. Sparks published "The Business of Government, Municipal," and H. J. G. Van Andel issued a "Holland Grammar, with Exercises," as an elementary course for schools and colleges. H. W. Frohne published a work on "Home Interiors," pertaining to the subject of furnishing and decorating the home, suggestions for the selection and arrangement of furniture, rugs, and draperies, and for the decorative treatment of floors, walls and ceilings in the home.

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

### MILITARY HISTORY

TRADITIONAL INDIAN BATTLES—FIRST MILITARY CAMPAIGNS—CIVIL WAR PERIOD—REGIMENTAL RECORDS—SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR—THE GREAT WORLD WAR—ROLL OF HONOR.

Traditions tell us of Indian battles fought along the Grand river between the different tribes, long years before the white man decided to add this region to his dominion, and the burial grounds and their indestructible contents, the large number of arrow heads and implements of Indian warfare found along both sides of the river



seem to bear out those traditions. The victorious tribe doubtless made the site of Grand Rapids its home for many years, and was quite probably resident here when the section was first visited by white men. Details of the battle or battles are naturally lacking, although much has been surmised, but as the battles, if any there were, do not properly belong to the military history of the city or county it is unnecessary to present the deductions drawn by imaginative brains.

There are no records to show that any steps were taken for the organization of a military company here prior to the Mexican war. Upon the outbreak of that conflict, in 1846, although the army raised for its prosecution was not large, and Grand Rapids at that time was but a mere hamlet, the martial spirit was aroused, and a considerable number went out from here to join in the hostilities. A portion of one company for that service was raised in Grand Rapids. After the close of the Mexican war, the chief local incitement to military ardor for some years was the tenor of news occasionally received from the West, of conflicts with the border savages. Now and then an officer of the United States army would obtain some enlistments from Grand Rapids and vicinity for frontier service. So the military spirit did not wholly die out, and besides, the people were fully alive to the soundness of the advice given by Washington, to keep ourselves always in a respectable attitude for defense.

On July 12, 1855, two local military companies were organized and their officers elected. One was the Grand Rapids Light Guards, and the name of W. L. Coffinberry headed the list of members of this company. He was at that time city surveyor at Grand Rapids and was made captain of the company. The other commissioned officers were F. W. Worden, first lieutenant; E. T. Nelson, second lieutenant, and A. L. Gage, third lieutenant. The other company was the Grand Rapids Artillery, a west side company, with Lucius Patterson as captain, and Baker Borden, William K. Wheeler and Alfred B. Turner, lieutenants. The first named of these companies was shortly afterward reorganized, with Daniel McConnell as captain, and the name was changed to Valley City Light Guards, and subsequently further shortened to Valley City Guards. In 1856 Mrs. James Lyman started a movement to procure a banner for this company, and a beautiful silk ensign was made by the Misses Ferguson, the presentation of which to the company was an event of considerable public interest in those rather unmilitary days.

Soon afterward the Ringgold Light Artillery was organized, with Stephen G. Champlin as captain, and about this time the three companies were mustered into the Fifty-first Uniformed Michigan militia, of which Daniel McConnell was colonel, Orville C. Hartwell was lieutenant-colonel, and S. G. Champlin and Ammon Wilson, majors. These three companies were out on parade for review, Jan. 7, 1858. Another company, the Grand Rapids Rifles, composed mostly of German citizens, was organized in 1859, and this as well as the Valley City Guards, when the war with the South broke out, went with unbroken ranks into the Union army. So much for military matters and the martial spirit prevailing in Grand Rapids previous to the coming on of the Civil war, in 1861.

## THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD.

On April 15, 1861, the day after the fall of Fort Sumter and the day of President Lincoln's first call for troops, a war meeting was held in Luce's Hall, corner of Monroe and Ottawa streets, addressed by Col. A. T. McReynolds and others. The hall was filled to overflowing, and a spirit of intense patriotism was manifested. The pervading sentiment was to the effect that the Union must be preserved at all hazards and that the people of this county and valley would come to the front to a man, if need be, armed and equipped, for the support of the National Government.

One week later another meeting was held and the city was aglow with patriotic ardor. On April 16 Governor Blair issued a call for volunteers to fill Michigan's quota and the work of enlisting was at once begun. Grand Rapids was not assigned a company in the First regiment, of which Col. John C. Robinson, then a captain in the United States army, was given command. Enlistments and company organizations followed in rapid succession all over the State, and while no completed organization from Kent county was in the three-months' service, there were a goodly number of enlistments from Grand River Valley in the different companies of the regiment. The professions, merchants, mechanics, farmer boys and laborers, all were imbued with the same spirit and promptly laid aside their several vocations and joined in the supreme effort to preserve the Union of States. Gentlemen of the cloth laid aside their shepherd's crooks and went to the front in various capacities. During the four years of bloody warfare Michigan met every call for troops in advance of the time limit, and Kent county was always among the first to respond with her quota.

While the "boys" were at the front the citizens at home were not idle, and the devoted mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts, imbued with the same spirit which had taken their loved ones from them, assisted in organizing varied relief associations. There was outward show of sympathy and interest during the first few months, but by the following year, after the disaster of the Peninsular campaign, matters settled down to a war basis and sentiment was banished in the interest of helpful needs. Public and private donations to the Federal cause were kept up until the final capitulation at Appomattox.

It is not possible to trace the record of all of Kent county's valiant soldiers through the changing fortunes of four years of bloody war; neither would space permit, were it possible. Without disparagement to the heroic services of any, it shall be the purpose of these pages to mention the organizations, which, as a whole, were more closely connected with Kent county than other military organizations. While other regiments may have achieved equal honors on the bloody fields, it is morally certain that none surpassed those hereinafter mentioned in the performance of stern duty, and in which this county was so represented.

The Third Michigan infantry was organized at Grand Rapids, in April and May, 1861, and was mustered in on June 10. The Valley City Guards tendered their services, were accepted, and formed a company in this regiment. It left the State on June 13 and was attached to Richardson's brigade, Tyler's division, and McDowell's



corps. It was engaged at Blackburn's Ford and Bull Run, and a detachment was in the engagement at the Occoquan River. The regiment encamped near Alexandria during the winter, under command of Colonel Champlin, Colonel McConnell having resigned, and in the Spring was assigned to the Third brigade, First division, and Third corps. It participated in the battle of Williamsburg and at Fair Oaks lost 30 killed, 124 wounded, and 15 missing. In the Seven Days' battles it fought at Savage Station, Peach Orchard, Charles City Cross-roads, and Malvern Hill, July 1. Prince de Joinville, speaking of the brigade, said of its work at Fair Oaks: "It advanced firm as a wall into the midst of the disordered mass \* \* \* and did more by its example than the most powerful reinforcement." The regiment was engaged at Groveton, again sustaining losses, and was at Chantilly on Sept. 1. It then was on the march and in camp at various points in Maryland and Virginia, finally going into camp at Falmouth, on Oct. 23. It was under fire three days at the first battle of Fredericksburg, and then encamped near Falmouth until May 1, 1863. It fought at Chancellorsville, losing 63, and at Gettysburg, losing 41. It then moved to Manassas Gap and was engaged at Wapping Heights. It was ordered to New York at the time of the draft, in August, but returned to Culpepper in September; was in a skirmish at Auburn Heights, in October; and in the battle at Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock, the following month. It took part in the Mine Run campaign, engaged the enemy at Locust Grove, and at Mine Run charged the enemy's works, driving him from three lines of rifle pits. The regiment went into camp at Brandy Station on Dec. 2, where 207 of the men re-enlisted and were furloughed home, rejoining the regiment in mid-winter. On May 4, 1864, the regiment encamped at Chancellorsville, being then in the Second brigade, Third division, and Second corps, and in the Battle of the Wilderness it again sustained heavy loss. It fought at Todd's Tavern; participated in a successful charge at Spottsylvania, capturing a number of prisoners and two flags; was engaged at the North Anna, its losses in the engagements of May being 31 killed, 119 wounded, and 29 missing. It fought at Cold Harbor, and on June 9 the regiment, with the exception of the re-enlisted men and recruits, was ordered home for discharge. The remaining officers and men were formed into a battalion of four companies and attached to the Fifth Michigan infantry. This regiment was mustered out at Detroit, June 20, 1864. Its total strength was 1,000, its loss by death 224. As soon as it was mustered out orders were issued to reorganize the regiment. This was done during the summer and it was mustered in at Grand Rapids on Oct. 15. It left the State, Oct. 20, reported at Nashville and was ordered to Decatur, Ala., where it was stationed during November, being in a small engagement on the 23d. It was then ordered to Fort Rosecrans, Murfreesboro. The pickets being forced in and the town possessed by Faulkner's brigade four companies of the Third joined other troops in a spirited engagement, repulsing the enemy. The regiment was in numerous small affairs and on Jan. 16, 1865, it moved to Huntsville, Ala., where it was assigned to the Third brigade, Third division, and Fourth army corps. It moved to Jonesboro, and was ordered to Nashville on April 20. On June 15 it was sent to Texas, reaching Green



Lake on July 11, and on Sept. 12 it started for San Antonio, reaching there two weeks later. It engaged in provost guard duty and during the winter two companies were on duty at Gonzales. The regiment was mustered out at Victoria, May 26, 1866.

The Eighth regiment of infantry was organized at Grand Rapids, in August, 1861, and was ordered to Fort Wayne, Detroit, arriving there, Sept. 16. It was mustered in, Sept. 23, and left the State, Sept. 27, and went into camp at Meridian Hill, near Washington, on the 30th. On Oct. 10 it joined the Second brigade, Expeditionary corps, under Gen. T. W. Sherman, and moved to Hilton Head by steamer, reaching there, Nov. 8, after a small engagement at Port Royal, S. C., the previous day. It moved to Beaufort on Dec. 6 and was under fire at Coosaw river and Port Royal Ferry. It was in camp at Gray's Hill and Beaufort during the month of January, 1862, on drill, picket, guard and reconnoitering duty until April 9, when it moved to Tybee Island, Ga., and was at the fall of Fort Pulaski. On April 16 seven companies embarked for Wilmington Island as an escort and were in a skirmish with the Thirteenth Georgia, 800 strong, routing it, but losing 11 killed and 34 wounded. The regiment was on drill and picket duty until June 1, was then attached to the First brigade, Second division, and participated in the assault on the works on James Island, losing 13 killed, 98 wounded, 35 captured and 36 missing, out of a total of 534. It was a dashing affair, but unsuccessful. The regiment moved for Newport News on July 5, and on Aug. 4 proceeded toward the upper Potomac. It was at the second battle of Bull Run; fought at Chantilly; was heavily engaged at South Mountain and Antietam; moved into Virginia again, in September, and was at Falmouth from Nov. 18 until Dec. 12. It was engaged at Fredericksburg and then encamped near Falmouth until Feb. 13, 1863, and at Newport News until March 19. It was then stationed at Louisville and Lebanon, Ky., until June, and was in the siege of Vicksburg from June 22 until July 4. It was then engaged at Jackson, moved back to Milldale, near Vicksburg, on the 23d, and marched toward Crab Orchard early in August, reaching there on the 27th. On Sept. 10 it proceeded to Knoxville, Tenn., remained in camp from Sept. 26 to Oct. 3, and was in the Blue Springs affair on the 10th. It was engaged at Loudon and Lenoir's Station, Campbell's Station, and in the defense of Knoxville, where it was stationed at Fort Sanders. After the siege it encamped at Blain's Cross-roads, where 283 re-enlisted as veterans and were furloughed home through February. They rejoined the regiment in March with a large number of recruits. The regiment was engaged at the battle of the Wilderness, driving the enemy from their first line of rifle-pits, and losing 99 in killed, wounded and missing, among them Colonel Graves. At Spottsylvania it assaulted the enemy's entrenchments and lost 49. It was then successively engaged at the North Anna, Bethesda Church, Cold Harbor, and the first assaults at Petersburg, losing 49 men, and remained in the trenches constantly under fire until July 30, when it participated in the engagement following the explosion of the mine. It fought at the Weldon Railroad, Reams' Station, Poplar Spring Church, Pegram's Farm, Boydton Road, and Hatcher's Run, and was on picket and trench duty through the winter. It assisted in repelling the as-



sault on Fort Stedman, in March, 1865, and was in the final assault of April 2. It was among the first to enter Petersburg, on April 3. It remained on guard duty until the 20th and took transports for Alexandria on the 21st. On May 9, the regiment entered Washington, was assigned to guard and patrol duty, and was mustered out, July 30, 1865.

The Thirteenth Michigan infantry was organized at Kalamazoo in the Fall and Winter of 1861. It was mustered in, Jan. 17, 1862, and left the State, Feb. 12. Col. Charles E. Stuart having resigned, Col. Michael Shoemaker took command. The regiment was ordered to Nashville, where it formed part of Wood's division of Buell's army, and was on the forced march for the relief of Grant at Shiloh, reaching the battlefield on the second day. It was then engaged at Farmington, Owl Creek, and in the siege of Corinth. On June 2 it moved eastward with Buell's army and was on fortification work and guard duty at Stevenson, Ala., from July 18 to Aug. 21, when the post of Stevenson was placed under Colonel Shoemaker's command, the Thirteenth Michigan, with four companies from other regiments and Simonson's Indiana battery being left as a garrison, the post becoming a depot of supplies and for convalescents. On the 30th instructions were received to leave, as the enemy was congregating in force. The following morning a force of Confederate cavalry was seen near the fort and scattered by the artillery, skirmishers following until they came upon a heavy force, which fired upon them. The fort was attacked at 10 o'clock, the fight continuing until 3 p. m. Reinforcements arrived at that time and all stores, baggage and convalescents were placed on trains for Nashville. The march for Nashville was begun at 5 p. m., the Thirteenth bringing up the rear and keeping off the enemy's attack. Left far in the rear by the other regiments and the artillery, the regiment joined its division on Sept. 3, after being given up for lost. Nashville was reached on the 6th. The regiment joined in pursuit of Bragg, was engaged at Munfordville, the battle of Perryville, and at Danville. It was stationed at Silver Springs, Tenn., in early November, and on the 10th joined the forces that drove the enemy from Lebanon. It was on train guard and picket duty at Nashville until Dec. 26, being engaged in the meantime at Gallatin and Mill Creek. It moved on Murfreesboro with the Third brigade, First division, Thomas' corps; was on the skirmish line and in the desperate engagements at Stone's River, losing 95 in killed, wounded and missing. When the right wing was being driven back in confusion on the first day of the battle the brigade to which the Thirteenth was attached advanced to the extreme right and formed in line of battle, becoming hotly engaged. The battery supporting the regiment opened rapid fire, but the other regiments of the brigade passed to the rear and thus forced it to take a new position, from which it was again driven with a loss of two guns. All the other regiments falling back a second time, the Thirteenth was left alone to meet two brigades. By a steady fire it checked the advance, dropped back to a better position, then charged the advancing brigades with bullet and bayonet, scattering them and regaining the lost ground, retaking the two captured guns and capturing 68 prisoners. This gallant act was accompanied by a loss of 35 per cent. of its



numbers engaged. "Great praise is due this regiment," said the Nashville Union, "for the unparalleled gallantry, both of officers and men, who are said to have fought like heroes. Truly Michigan has reason to be proud of the troops she has sent out." The regiment was stationed at Murfreesboro until June 24, 1863, when it was assigned to the First brigade, First division, Twentieth corps, and advanced on Tullahoma, following Bragg after his evacuation of that place. It was in an engagement at Pelham, in July, and was then in camp at Hillsboro until Aug. 16, when the army advanced into Georgia. It fought at Lookout Valley, was in the engagement at Chickamauga, making a charge and losing 107 in killed, wounded and missing. The regiment was organized as engineers in November, assigned to duty at Chattanooga, and participated at Missionary Ridge. It was stationed at Chickamauga, in December and January, and there 173 re-enlisted as veterans and were furloughed home. They rejoined the regiment in April with over 400 recruits and the command was stationed at Lookout Mountain during the summer. It was relieved from duty as engineers, Sept. 25, 1864, and assigned to the Second brigade, First division, Fourteenth corps, joining it at Rome, Ga. It marched to the sea, reached Savannah on Dec. 16, and engaged in the siege. It made the campaign of the Carolinas, being engaged at Catawba River, Averasboro and Bentonville, sustaining in the last action a loss of 110, its commanding officer, Colonel Eaton, being among the killed. It was in the Grand Review at Washington, and was mustered out at Louisville on July 25, 1865.

The Fourteenth Michigan infantry was organized at Ypsilanti and was mustered in, Feb. 13, 1862. It left the State, April 17, and joined the army at Pittsburg Landing. It participated in the siege of Corinth during May and was engaged at Farmington. After the siege of Corinth it moved with Buell's army, being finally stationed at Tuscumbia, Ala. On Sept. 1 it joined in the march for Louisville, but was detached at Nashville and participated in the engagement at La Vergne, routing the Thirty-second Alabama, taking a fort and 100 prisoners. A few days later it was in the fight at Nashville, was also in a severe engagement at Brentwood and was stationed at Stone's River in November and part of December. It participated in the battle there after a thirty-mile march through mud and rain the previous night, and was then engaged in railroad guard and picket duty at Nashville, Franklin and Brentwood, during the Winter and Spring. Late in the summer the command was mounted, and in August Company C assisted in the capture of a notorious guerilla band commanded by Dick McCann, at Weems' Springs. In the affair at Lawrenceburg, in November, 120 men defeated 400 cavalry. Guerillas were captured and scattered and many inhabitants induced to take the oath of allegiance while the regiment was stationed at Franklin and Columbia, during the Fall. It became a veteran regiment, Jan. 14, 1864, when 414 re-enlisted. The veterans of Companies C, F, G, I and K were furloughed in February and the others in March. The re-enlistments had been made with the understanding that the regiment would be continued as mounted infantry. This was disregarded and great dissatisfaction was felt, but the regiment was loyal and continued to perform its duties. It joined Sherman's army in the ad-



vance through Georgia; was engaged at Kennesaw Mountain; charged the rifle pits at the Chattahoochee River, capturing many prisoners; was active during the siege of Atlanta; carried a line of works at Jonesboro, capturing four pieces of artillery, four caissons, a general and his staff, the colors of the First Arkansas, and 300 men. It was engaged at Florence, Ala., in September; marched with Sherman to Savannah; and in the Carolina campaign was engaged at Fayetteville, where it drove the enemy two miles, capturing his camp and a large quantity of forage; at Averasboro and at Bentonville, where it charged the works, captured 270 prisoners, the colors of the Fortieth North Carolina, and 600 stands of arms. A later charge carried the works, 135 prisoners and the colors of the Fifty-fourth Virginia being taken. The next morning the regiment was in a desperate encounter for nearly an hour and in a continual skirmish all day. It encamped at Goldsboro from March 23 to April 10, and at the Cape Fear River until the surrender of Johnston's army. It participated in the Grand Review at Washington, was sent to Louisville in June, and was mustered out on July 18.

The Twenty-first Michigan infantry was organized at Ionia and was mustered in, Sept. 4, 1862. It left the State on Sept. 12, reported at Cincinnati, was sent to Louisville, entered upon the march through Kentucky, and was in the battle of Perryville, rendering efficient service. It reached Nashville, Nov. 12, and joined the advance toward Murfreesboro, being engaged at La Vergne, Stewart's Creek and at Stone's River, where it lost 17 killed, 85 wounded, and 37 missing. It was with Sill's brigade, Sheridan's division, which blocked the enemy and saved the army. It remained on picket and guard duty at Murfreesboro until June, when it moved to Tullahoma, and was afterward stationed at Cowan, Anderson's Station, and Bridgeport. On Sept. 2 it advanced into Georgia, participated in the battle of Chickamauga, with the same brigade as at Stone's River, and was in the hottest of the fight after the breaking of the line by Longstreet. Sheridan's division was forced back, but in good order, and by a charge drove the enemy back and regained its position. Being unsupported, it was again driven back, the Twenty-first losing 11 killed, 58 wounded, 35 missing and 3 prisoners. It was detached to form part of the engineer brigade and was engaged in that work during the battle of Missionary Ridge. It was stationed near Chattanooga until June, 1864, building a bridge and erecting storehouses. On June 11 it was ordered to Lookout Mountain, engaging in building hospitals, running mills, and on picket duty. It was relieved from engineer duty in September and joined Rousseau's forces in pursuit of Forrest into Alabama. It was ordered to Chattanooga and Dalton, Ga., in October, and received orders on Nov. 1 to join the Second brigade, First division, Fourteenth army corps, for the march to the sea. It moved to Milledgeville, then toward Augusta, but changed its course and marched to Savannah, where the regiment was in the trenches on short rations and without covering until Dec. 18. After the evacuation it refitted for the Carolina campaign, proceeded to Sister's Ferry, where it crossed the Savannah River, Feb. 5, was in the engagement at Averasboro, and was heavily engaged at Bentonville, losing 92 officers and men, killed and wounded, out of 230. It reached Golds-



boro on March 25, after a sixty-four days' march, with an issue of but twelve days' rations. It moved to Haywood, where it remained until Johnston's surrender, and then marched to Richmond, 280 miles, in less than eight days. It participated in the Grand Review at Washington and was mustered out, June 8, 1865.

The Twenty-sixth Michigan infantry was organized at Jackson and was mustered in Dec. 12, 1862. It left the State Dec. 13, reported at Washington, was assigned to provost duty at Alexandria, and was thus employed until April, 1863, when it was sent to Suffolk, Va., for defense. On June 20 it moved to Yorktown, marched to the Chickahominy, then returned to Yorktown and proceeded to New York to maintain peace in the draft riots. It joined the Army of the Potomac Oct. 13, was attached to the First brigade, First division, Second corps, and came to be recognized as the skirmish regiment of the division. It was engaged at Mine Run and then went into Winter quarters at Stevensburg. It was at the battle of the Wilderness, part of the time in reserve, and charged Stuart's dismounted cavalry on May 7, capturing a number of prisoners and important despatches. It was in the engagements at Corbin's Bridge, the Ny River, the Po River, and Spottsylvania, where it participated in the charge of the Second corps when the works were carried in a hand-to-hand fight with the bayonet, the colors of the Twenty-sixth being the first planted. It also captured two brass guns and the gunners, its loss being 27 killed, 98 wounded, and 14 missing. It was next engaged at the North Anna, Totopotomy, and Cold Harbor, and was in the assault at Petersburg on June 16, in which the first line was carried. It fought at the Weldon Railroad, was engaged at Deep Bottom, where its brigade drove the enemy and captured four guns, the Twenty-sixth leading in skirmish line. The regiment attacked double its numbers the following day and drove them for half a mile. In August it was engaged at Strawberry Plains, White Oak Swamp, and Reams' Station, where it assisted in repelling repeated assaults and took part in the charge when the works taken by the enemy were retaken. It remained before Petersburg during the Winter and in March, 1865, charged the enemy's works at Peeble's Farm, capturing a portion of them. It was in action at Hatcher's Run, the Boydton Road, White Oak Road, Sutherland's Station, Amelia Springs, Deatonville, Sailor's Creek, High Bridge and Farmville, and was at Appomattox when Lee surrendered, having captured over 400 prisoners between March 28 and April 9, and lost 60 killed and wounded. It was ordered to Washington on May 2, was in the Grand Review, and was mustered out at Bailey's Crossroads, June 4.

The First Engineers was organized at Marshall and was mustered in, Oct. 29, 1861. It left the State, Dec. 17, and reported to General Buell at Louisville. Companies B, E, and I, under Col. William P. Innes, were ordered to report to General McCook, at Munfordville, then moved for Bowling Green, and on the 28th for Nashville. The regiment was ordered to Shiloh in April and built several bridges en route with such rapidity that Buell was enabled to reach the field in time to bring victory out of threatened defeat. It received special mention by Buell. Companies A and K, under Maj. John B. Yates, left Nashville with General Mitchell's division, going to Hunts-



ville, Ala., and were employed during May in running trains over the Memphis & Charleston and Nashville & Decatur railroads. The other eight companies moved toward Corinth, building roads and placing siege guns, and in June proceeded toward Decatur, building bridges and trestles, and putting the railroad in running order. In July the entire regiment was at Huntsville, actively engaged in track replacing and bridge and trestle work. In August Company E was detached for fortification work at Huntsville. Companies A, B, D, G and H were sent to Nashville and were occupied until the middle of September in bridge building. C, F, K and I were sent to Stevenson and joined the regiment at Gallatin. The entire regiment took up the march for Bowling Green, thence for Louisville. The regiment moved to Nashville and went into camp at Mill Creek, where it built nine bridges. It was ordered to La Vergne, Jan. 1, 1863, and engaged in a skirmish. Its wagon train, in position of a half circle, with hastily constructed breastworks of logs and brush, was attacked by Wheeler's cavalry, numbering over 3,000, with a section of artillery, and 315 officers and men fought this force for five hours, repulsing seven assaults, the horsemen charging up to the very breastworks and the enemy's artillery being constantly employed. The enemy drew off at night with a loss of 50 killed and more wounded. By this repulse the rear of the army and most of its baggage train was saved. A correspondent said of it: "The scene was at times thrilling beyond description. The rebel horde dashed their horses against the circular brush fence with infuriated shouts and curses. \* \* \* They were met with staggering volleys. Horses and riders recoiled again and again until they despaired, and soon swept away through the dense forests. \* \* \* Truly, this was one of the most gallant affairs of the campaign." A standard of organization having been established, in 1862, the regiment was allowed twelve companies of 150 men each. From Jan. 1 to June 29, 1863, it was employed in general construction and repair work in the vicinity of La Vergne, Murfreesboro, Smyrna and Nashville, and on Oct. 31 was stationed at Elk Creek. Its excellent work in putting into position greatly needed pontoon bridges at Chattanooga was specially noticed in orders. During the Winter, Spring and Summer, the regiment was constantly employed in building trestle work, bridges, storehouses, block houses and hospitals, in saw-mill work at Chattanooga and Bridgeport, and along the railway lines as far south as Decatur and Stevenson, Ala. It was ordered to Atlanta, Sept. 25, and in October 148 re-enlisted as veterans, which with the recruits enabled the regiment to maintain its full organization. It was constantly employed on the Atlanta campaign and on the march to Savannah, keeping up with the army, tearing up railroad track, destroying bridges and building roads. On Jan. 26, 1865, it took transports for Beaufort, S. C., and joined the march to Goldsboro, N. C., during which it destroyed thirty miles of track, built eight or ten bridges and made miles of corduroy road. The regiment moved from Goldsboro to Raleigh and from there to Washington. It participated in the Grand Review and was then ordered to Nashville. It was mustered out, Sept. 22, 1865.

The Second Michigan cavalry was organized at Grand Rapids and was mustered in, Oct. 2, 1861. It left the State on Nov. 14, was



stationed at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, was engaged in skirmishes at Point Pleasant, Tipton and New Madrid, participated in the siege of Island No. 10, and then moved with Pope's army to Mississippi. It was in the engagements at Pine Hill, Monterey, and Farmington, and the siege of Corinth. Col. Gordon Granger, who first commanded it, was made brigadier-general and was succeeded by Philip H. Sheridan as colonel, but the latter was not mustered in as such. The regiment was in the engagements at Booneville, Blackland, and Baldwin, in June, 1862, and was in a spirited fight at Booneville, July 1, where 7,000 of Chalmer's cavalry were repulsed by six companies, numbering less than 500 men. This was one of the greatest minor victories of the war. The Second Michigan and Second Iowa cavalry followed the enemy for twenty miles, captured a large amount of arms and clothing. The regiment was engaged at Rienzi, in August, when a largely superior force was defeated and dispersed and many prisoners were captured. Colonel Sheridan was made a brigadier-general and Lieut.-Col. Archibald P. Campbell was appointed colonel. The regiment was engaged at the battle of Perryville, Ky., then at Harrodsburg, Lancaster, and the Rockcastle River. In December, 1862, and January, 1863, it was in a raid in Eastern Tennessee, being engaged at Blountville, Zollicoffer, Wartrace, Jonesville, Bacon Creek and Glasgow. In March it was engaged at Milton, Gainsville, Spring Hill, Columbia, Hillsboro and Brentwood. The engagement at Columbia was against a much larger force, but two battalions of the Second Michigan cavalry by tremendous efforts saved the wagon trains, which were in charge of the Eighteenth Ohio cavalry. The regiment fought at McGarvick's Ford, in April, and in the Summer was engaged at Triune, Rover, Middletown, Shelbyville, Elk River Ford, and Decherd. It participated at Chickamauga, holding an important point against the enemy, and in October was engaged in the pursuit of Wheeler's cavalry, being in action at Anderson's Crossroads. It fought at Sparta, Dandridge and Mossy Creek, in December, and at Dandridge and Pigeon River, in January, 1864. While at Cleveland, Tenn., 326 re-enlisted as veterans and took a furlough, re-joining the regiment in July. On the Atlanta campaign the regiment fought at Dug Gap, Red Clay, the Etowah River, and Acworth, and joined General Thomas' army in Tennessee. It met and defeated the enemy at Campbellville and Franklin, in September; was engaged at Cypress River in October, when a force four times that of the Union army was defeated; participated at Raccoon Ford, and in November was engaged at Shoal Creek, Lawrenceburg, Campbellville, Columbia, Spring Hill, and the battle of Franklin. In December it was engaged at Nashville, Richland Creek, Pulaski and Sugar Creek, and in 1865 fought at Corinth, Tuscaloosa, Trion, Bridgeville, and Talladega. It was in camp at Macon from May 1 until July 17, detachments being sent to garrison Perry, Thomaston, Barnesville, Forsyth, and Milledgeville. The regiment was mustered out Aug. 17, 1865.

The Third Michigan cavalry was organized at Grand Rapids and was mustered in Nov. 1, 1861. It left the state Nov. 28, was stationed at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, during the Winter, and then joined Pope's movement against New Madrid and Island No. 10. Capt.



John K. Mizner took command as colonel on March 31. The regiment was engaged at Farmington, Miss., and in the siege of Corinth, then joined Grant's forces in the campaign of Mississippi, and fought at Spangler's Mills, Bay Spring, and Iuka, where it performed efficient work. Five privates captured two officers and a stand of colors. In October it was engaged in the battles of Corinth and the Hatchie River. The remainder of the year it was in actions at Hudsonville, Holly Springs, Lumpkin's Mill, Oxford and Coffeetown. The regiment was engaged at Brownsville in January and Clifton in February. It was in engagements at Jackson and Panola in July, and at Grenada in August, was in the advance, destroying over sixty locomotives and more than 400 cars. In October it participated at Byhalia and Wyatt's Ford on the Tallahatchie River. It was engaged in scouting and numerous expeditions in November and December, meeting the enemy at Ripley, Orizaba, Ellistown, Purdy, and Jack's Creek, and on Jan. 1, 1864, went into Winter quarters at LaGrange, Tenn., where 592 re-enlisted as veterans, received a furlough, and reached home Feb. 7. The regiment was ordered to St. Louis, where it was on provost duty for about two months. It reported at Little Rock, May 24, and was engaged in scouting. It assisted in driving Shelby beyond the river and in dispersing guerrillas. In November, 1864, and February, 1865, it garrisoned Brownsville, and in its scouting expeditions collected large droves of cattle, supplying nearly all the beef required for the Department of Arkansas. It was assigned to the First brigade, First division, Seventh army corps, which on March 14 was transferred to the military division of West Mississippi and ordered to Mobile, where it engaged in the siege. After the fall of that point the regiment was employed on outpost duty. On the surrender of the enemy's forces east of the Mississippi, the regiment was selected as escort of Major-General Canby, and received the formal surrender of General Taylor's army. In May the regiment moved to Baton Rouge, La., where it joined the Texas expedition and reached San Antonio on Aug. 2. It was engaged in garrison and escort duty and along the Mexican frontier until mustered out at San Antonio, Feb. 15, 1866.

The Fourth Michigan cavalry was organized at Detroit and was mustered in Aug. 29, 1862. It left the state Sept. 20, for Louisville, thence to Tennessee, and was engaged at Stanford, Gallatin, Lebanon, Rural Hill, Baird's Mill, Hollow Tree Gap, Wilson's Creek Road, Franklin, Laurel Hill, Wilson's Creek, La Vergne, Jefferson Pike Bridge, Nashville Pike, Dec. 30, and Stone's River, before the close of the year. The regiment was in successful charges at Stone's River against superior forces. In January and February, 1863, it fought at La Vergne, Manchester Pike, Harpeth River, Cumberland Shoals, Bradyville, Woodbury, Rover, Charlotte, and Auburn, and at Liberty drove Morgan's cavalry for six miles. The regiment was next engaged at Unionville, Thompson's Station, Rutherford Creek, Duck River, Prosperity Church, Liberty, Snow Hill, McMinnville, Statesville, Alexandria, Wartrace, and Middletown. At the last named place it charged and drove the enemy, capturing and destroying a large quantity of ordnance stores and camp equipage, and the standard of the First Alabama cavalry. At Shelbyville it assisted in a



charge when 599 prisoners and three pieces of artillery were taken, and the enemy was driven out in confusion, the Union forces being 1,500 and the enemy's over 4,000. A large body was driven into the river, from which over 200 bodies were taken. In the Summer of 1863 the regiment was engaged at Hickory Creek, Tullahoma, Rock Island, Sparta, Sperry's Mill, Smith's Cross-roads, Reed's Bridge, the battle of Chickamauga, Rossville, and Cotton Port. At Chickamauga its brigade, with less than 1,000 men in line, fought 7,000 from 7 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the evening, falling back in order for five miles. The regiment was in action at Smith's Cross-roads, Hill Creek, and McMinnville, in October, and was in camp at Maysville from the latter part of October until Nov. 17. It fought at Chattanooga and at Missionary Ridge, and at Cleveland captured 90 wagons, 260 prisoners, 480 mules, and 275 hogs. It burned the railroad bridge at the Etowah River and the depot, iron works and the rolling mill at Cleveland. From January to March, 1864, it took part in the operations about Tunnel Hill and on the Dalton Road, and remained in camp at the Etowah until March 29, when it was ordered to Nashville and attached to the Second cavalry division. In May it defeated a brigade at Farmer's Bridge, fought at Arundel Creek, and was surrounded at Kingston, but cut its way out. On the Atlanta campaign it fought at Dallas, Villa Rica, Lost Mountain, Big Shanty, McAfee's Cross-roads, Noonday Creek, and Kennesaw Mountain. At Latimar's Mill on Noonday Creek a force less than 1,000 received the attack of 4,500 of Wheeler's cavalry and fell back, but being reinforced by three regiments the enemy was in turn repulsed. The Fourth Michigan repulsed three charges by two regiments and gained new laurels. It was engaged at Roswell, Lebanon Mills, Stone Mountain, Covington, Flat Rock, in siege of Atlanta, Fair Oaks, Jonesboro, Lovejoy's Station and McDonough. At Jonesboro the entire division was surrounded and Minty's brigade, to which the Fourth was attached, made one of the greatest charges of the war, broke the enclosing lines in superb manner, thus opening a way for Kilpatrick's forces to break from the cordon, and captured three stands of colors. After the fall of Atlanta the regiment was engaged at Roswell, Sweetwater, Nose's Creek, Lost Mountain, New Hope Church, Stilesboro, Rome and Blue Pond. In the latter part of October the regiment was ordered to Nashville, thence to Louisville, where it was newly mounted and equipped. It marched to Gravelly Springs, arriving Jan. 25, 1865, and remained there until early March. Moving south from Eastport, it became engaged at Selma, Ala., where it joined in the assault and captured the works under terrific fire, Col. Minty being the first to enter alive. The result of this daring affair was the capture of a strongly fortified city, nearly 100 pieces of artillery, 2,700 prisoners and a large amount of ammunition and stores. On May 7 Lieutenant-Colonel Pritchard was ordered to proceed with the regiment and picket the Ocmulgee river for the purpose of preventing the escape of Jefferson Davis, who was supposed to be in that section. With 135 men he proceeded to Irwinsville, reaching there about 3 a. m. on the 10th, almost simultaneously with another party under Lieutenant-Colonel Harnden of the First Wisconsin cavalry, and the two exchanged shots in the darkness, each thinking the other



party to be some of the enemy. In the encounter some of Pritchard's men surrounded the enemy's camp and captured Mr. and Mrs. Davis and four children; John H. Reagan, the Confederate postmaster-general; Colonels Johnson and Lubbock, his aides-de-camp; Burton N. Harrison, his private secretary; Major Maurand, Captain Moody and Lieutenant Hathaway; Jeff D. Howell, a midshipman in the Confederate navy; 13 private soldiers; Miss Maggie Howell (sister of Mrs. Davis), two waiting maids and several servants. The party proceeded to Macon, from which point Pritchard with escort and train guard conveyed his prisoners to Fortress Monroe. On the 21st the regiment was ordered to Nashville and was mustered out, July 1, 1865.

The Fifth Michigan cavalry was organized at Detroit and was mustered into the United States service, Aug. 30, 1862. It left Detroit, Dec. 4, 1862, for Washington, D. C., with an enrollment of 1,144 officers and men. Soon after the arrival of the regiment at Washington it was assigned to the Michigan cavalry brigade, composed of the First, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Michigan cavalry, and these regiments served together during the war. In June, 1863, the brigade met the Confederate Gen. J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry near Hanover, Pa., and drove it back in a spirited charge, afterward dismounting and fighting on foot. In this engagement the Fifth lost severely. On July 3 the regiment, with the brigade, had one of the severest cavalry engagements of the war with Stuart's forces, and won a decisive victory in repelling the enemy's attack, driving him back so he could no longer threaten the rear of the Union lines. The next day the regiment started to intercept General Lee's army that was in full retreat upon Williamsport. It charged across a bridge on the side of the mountain leading to Williamsport, where the enemy's wagon train was passing, and with the brigade captured 1,500 prisoners and destroyed a large wagon train. A few days later it met the enemy near Boonsboro, where it was dismounted and charged the Confederates, who were behind stone walls, but the charge of the regiment was so impetuous that the enemy was driven in confusion. It took an active part in the engagement at Falling Waters, Md., where the Confederates were put to flight by the gallant charges of the Michigan men. The regiment returned to Virginia after General Lee had crossed the Potomac and in September fought at Culpepper Court House, Raccoon Ford, White's Ford, and Jack's Shop. The regiment was in the fight at James City, and had a severe engagement with the enemy at Buckland Mills, where it first fought on foot and then in a mounted charge drove the enemy pell mell for two miles. It was in the terrible battle of the Wilderness, on the Brock Road, and also at Haw's Shop, where the regiment was dismounted, as the country was too wooded to successfully maneuver cavalry, and, with the other regiments of the brigade, charged the enemy and a desperate hand-to-hand encounter took place. Two battle flags were captured by the regiment at the Opequan and it did gallant service at Winchester, Luray, Port Republic, Mt. Crawford, Woodstock, Cedar Creek, Newton, and Madison Court House. It was with General Sheridan when the Union forces moved in the direction of Gordonsville and Richmond and drove General Rosser from Louisa Court House, where a large amount of property was



destroyed, together with the depot and railroad and aqueducts on the line of the James river canal, seriously interfering with General Lee's sources of supplies. After the surrender of General Lee the regiment marched to Washington, where it took part in the Grand Review; was then sent to the Far West, and was finally mustered out in Utah.

The Sixth Michigan cavalry was organized in the summer of 1862, under authority of the Secretary of War granted directly to Hon. Francis W. Kellogg, member of Congress from the Congressional district which included Kent county. It comprised twelve troops of a maximum strength of 100 men each, including the proper complement of non-commissioned officers. The rendezvous was Grand Rapids and the regiment was mustered into the United States service, Oct. 11, 1862, with 1,229 officers and men. On Dec. 10 it proceeded to Washington, D. C., and went into camp on Meridian hill, where it was brigaded with the Fifth and Seventh and attached to Casey's division of Heintzelman's corps, Department of Washington. The regiment was first under fire at the battle of Hanover, Pa., and to quote General Kilpatrick's report, it "particularly distinguished" itself at Hunters-town after dark on July 2, where it encountered Wade Hampton's cavalry. On July 3 it was in the famous cavalry fight on the right at Gettysburg, where it supported Pennington's battery. It marched all day, July 4, in a pouring rain and was in the engagement in the mountain pass at Monterey, at midnight. It then fought at Smithfield, Boonsboro, Hagerstown, Williamsport, and Falling Waters, where it attacked the rear-guard of Lee's army, making a charge which Kilpatrick in his official report referred to as "the most gallant ever made," and which a Confederate writer in a Southern paper afterward described as "a charge of dare-devils." The regiment was with Custer in all the cavalry engagements which followed in Virginia; performed conspicuous service at Brandy Station and Buckland Mills; was at Mine Run, Morton's, Raccoon, and Summerville fords, and other minor engagements, after which it went into winter quarters at Stevensburg. On May 6, 1864, the regiment was hotly engaged on the first day of Sheridan's great raid, when 10,000 cavalymen marched by fours, in a single column; was at Beaver Dam Station, Yellow Tavern, Hanover town, Haw's Shop, Cold Harbor, Trevilian Station, Meadow Bridge, and many other engagements in the months of May and June. It accompanied Sheridan to the Shenandoah Valley and was in the battles of Winchester, Tom's Brook, Luray, Shepherdstown and Cedar Creek. In the Spring of 1865 it left Winchester with Sheridan and did excellent service in the closing campaign of the war, from Winchester to Appomattox. It marched to Washington, participated in the Grand Review, and was then ordered to Leavenworth, Kan., where it marched 1,100 miles via Fort Kearny, Julesburg, and Fort Laramie, to Powder River, Wyoming Territory. The men who had less than two years to serve were ordered back to the State and were mustered out at Jackson, Mich., in November, 1865. The others were consolidated into a new regiment and sent to Utah, where they were afterward mustered out.

The Seventh Michigan cavalry was organized at Grand Rapids in the Summer and Fall of 1862, being one of the cavalry regiments



which the secretary of war authorized the Hon. F. W. Kellogg to recruit at that time. On Jan. 27, 1863, the last contingent of the ten companies was mustered in and on Feb. 20 the horses of the first five companies, with a detail of twenty men, proceeded to Washington, followed on the 21st by the horses of the other five companies, and on the 22nd by the main body of the regiment. It reached Washington, Feb. 27, encamped on what was known as Meridian Hill and remained there for about a month. On March 26 it proceeded across the river over Long Bridge and marched to Fairfax Court House, where it was united with the Fifth and Sixth Michigan cavalry into a brigade which was assigned to General Stahel's cavalry division, Department of Washington. From May 3 until June 24, 1863, the regiment was engaged in scout duty and in guarding the Orange & Alexandria railroad, which was the line of supplies for the Army of the Potomac, and while thus engaged it had several skirmishes with Mosby's men. In one of these actions near Catlett's Station, where Mosby had destroyed a train of cars, two small brass pieces were captured by the commands engaged, several men of the Seventh were injured, and quite a number of prisoners were taken from the enemy. On June 30 it participated in an engagement at Hanover, Pa., where the brigade was united in order to oppose the attempt of General Stuart to effect a junction with General Lee's army. The first battle-flag of the enemy captured by the regiment was taken in this action. On the night of July 2 the regiment was engaged until midnight at Hunterstown, Pa., and on July 3, with others of the brigade, it was at Gettysburg, on the extreme right of the Union army, where it was engaged the entire day. In this engagement, out of the 401 officers and men who went into the fight, the regiment lost 13 killed, 4 officers and 48 men wounded, and 39 missing. On the morning of July 4 it proceeded with the command to follow up Lee's retreating army and on that night, while marching through Monterey Pass, it was met by a volley of canister shot from two pieces of artillery in the road. These guns were promptly charged and taken by the Seventh, and the brigade captured many prisoners and some 400 wagons. The regiment was subsequently engaged at Smithburg, Hagerstown, and Williamsport, and at Falling Waters it captured a 10-pounder Parrott gun from the enemy. After a few days of much needed rest it again crossed the Potomac into Virginia and participated in engagements at Snicker's Gap, Kelley's Ford, Culpeper Court House, Raccoon Ford, White's Ford, and Jack's Shop. When the Army of the Potomac fell back from the Rapidan the enemy was met by the regiment near James City and on Oct. 10 it participated in a severe engagement at Buckland Mills. After that the enemy fell back toward the Rapidan and was not again encountered by the regiment until in November, at Stevensburg, and Morton's Ford. About daylight on the morning of May 6, 1864, it participated in a lively engagement in the Wilderness, near the intersection of the Furnace and Brock roads, where it was engaged all day. At daylight on the following morning it was again on the same ground, contending with the enemy until the middle of the afternoon, when he was driven from the field. On May 10 the regiment was engaged all day in destroying railroads, and at dawn of the 11th began skirmishing with the enemy. On that day an en-



gagement, at the intersection of the Telegraph and Brock roads, was opened by Stuart and continued all day, the regiment participating in several charges. It had several engagements at Meadow Bridge on the Chickahominy, where it forced a crossing and routed the enemy with a heavy loss. It was again engaged at Darney's Ferry, and on the same day the regiment made a saber charge at Crump's Creek, driving the enemy for three miles. On the 28th it was engaged at Haw's Shop, the regiment being exposed to a severe fire. On May 30 the Seventh and First Michigan were engaged in a hard fight with the enemy at Old Church, completely routing the Confederates. On May 31 the regiment participated in an engagement at Cold Harbor, and on the morning of June 1 it was attacked by superior forces of the enemy's infantry, but repulsed them with great slaughter. A few days later the regiment was attacked at Louisa Court House by Wickham's brigade of cavalry, but being supported by the First Michigan cavalry it maintained its ground. Thence it marched to Trevilian Station, and there for the greater part of two days it and the other cavalry regiments of Custer's, Merritt's, and Devin's brigades were engaged in one of the most desperate cavalry combats of the war, against Hampton's and Fitzhugh Lee's commands. In July the regiment engaged the enemy on the New Market road, on the north bank of the James river, where with other cavalry it repulsed a large infantry force of the enemy, and then by a charge captured 250 prisoners and two battle-flags. From Aug. 10 to 16 the regiment was moving about the country in the vicinity of Winchester, several times coming into collision with the enemy. It was in action at Front Royal, charging a whole brigade of Confederate cavalry, completely routing it and capturing 100 prisoners with a large number of horses and arms. At Berryville, it repulsed a determined attack of the enemy and from that time to the 25th it was engaged in scouting, picketing and light skirmishing. At the Opequan in September the regiment led the advance of the army from about 2 a. m., and after an attempt of the Twenty-fifth New York cavalry had been repulsed, it charged across the river and captured the rifle-pits upon the hills on the opposite bank. In the afternoon the enemy fled precipitately, the regiment being engaged until after dark, making many mounted charges during the day and capturing large numbers of prisoners, cannon and small arms. In September it was engaged at Port Republic and remained in that vicinity until Oct. 2, when it had a brush with the enemy at Mt. Crawford. At Tom's Brook the enemy was completely routed in an engagement participated in by the regiment, and was pursued for 26 miles. At the battle of Cedar Creek the regiment captured more prisoners than it had troopers in its ranks, and later it was again engaged with Early's army at the same place. On Dec. 19 the regiment participated in an expedition to Charlottesville and Gordonsville to wreck the railroads, and from day to day there was more or less skirmishing and a lively engagement at Liberty Mills on the Rapidan. On March 30, 1865, the regiment found the enemy in force on the White Oak road near Five Forks, and, in column of squadrons with sabers drawn, moved forward in a countercharge, and soon routed him. On March 31 it had a sharp engagement at the intersection of the Dinwiddie and Five Forks roads, and on April 1 it was



again engaged with Pickett's infantry near Five Forks, participating in the battle of that name and taking a prominent part in the final charge, capturing many prisoners and pursuing the enemy until after dark. On April 4 it skirmished with the enemy, made many captures on the way to Amelia Court House and Petersville, and participated in the battle of Sailor's Creek, in which the whole of Ewell's corps was captured. On April 8 it proceeded to Prospect Station and thence toward Appomattox Depot, where it had a spirited brush with the Confederates, capturing much property and ammunition. The regiment was deployed and hotly engaged on the morning of the 9th, but its Spencer carbines soon checked the enemy, and then followed the armistice which resulted in the surrender of Lee's army and the termination of the operations of the regiment in the Civil war. Gerry's South Carolina cavalry failed to keep the armistice, whereupon the Seventh Michigan charged upon it and put a quietus upon it in short order. With the brigade the regiment participated in the Grand Review at Washington and then was included in the assignment to the far West. Those of the regiment whose term of service expired before February, 1866, were mustered out, Dec. 15, 1865, and the others were transferred to the First Michigan veteran cavalry and retained in the service in Utah until March 10, 1866.

The Tenth Michigan cavalry was organized at Grand Rapids and was mustered in, Nov. 18, 1863. It left the State, Dec. 1, being ordered to Lexington, Ky., and was engaged at House Mountain, in January, 1864, after which it moved to Burnside Point. On Feb. 29 it moved for Knoxville, thence to Strawberry Plains, and in April met the enemy at Rheatown, Jonesboro, Johnsonville, Watauga, and Bean's Gap. The regiment was also engaged at Powder Spring Gap, Dandridge, Greenville, White Horn, Morristown, Bean's Station, Rogersville, Kingsport, Caney Branch, New Market, Williams' Ford, and Dutch Bottom. It was later engaged at Sevierville, Newport, Morristown, Greeneville, Mossy Creek, Bull's Gap, Blue Springs, Strawberry Plains, Flat Creek Bridge, and Rogersville. At McMullan's Ford seventy-two men, under Maj. Israel C. Smith, routed 400 Texas cavalry, capturing their commanding officer—a lieutenant-colonel—and nearly forty prisoners. The regiment was again engaged at Greeneville, Sevierville and Jonesboro, in September. At Greenville it participated in an action with Morgan's forces, charging his first camp and routing it and then repelling an advance with carbines. In October and November it was engaged at Johnston's Station, Watauga Bridge, Chucky Bend, Newport, Irish Bottoms, Madisonville, Morristown, and Strawberry Plains, where 700 men in trenches repulsed a force of 5,000. It was engaged at Kingsport, Bristol and Saltville, in December, destroying the salt works at the last named place. It also fought at Chucky Bend, in January, 1865, then encamped at Knoxville until March 21; then moved to upper East Tennessee and joined the raid into North Carolina, during which it destroyed 100 miles of track and several bridges belonging to the Tennessee and Virginia railroad. It made a forced march of 95 miles in twenty-two hours, reaching Henry and engaging the enemy on April 8, defeating a superior force. The regiment was detached at



Salem, and Major Smith, with twenty men armed with Spencer repeating rifles, crossed Grant's creek at Salisbury on a log and fired a flank volley which threw the defending forces into confusion. The regiment was also engaged at Statesville and Newton. It was then ordered to Tennessee, where it served until it was mustered out, at Memphis, Nov. 11, 1865.

In the artillery branch of the service Kent county was also represented. Battery B of the First light artillery was organized at Grand Rapids and was raised at the same time with the Second cavalry. It was mustered, Nov. 26, 1861. Its first engagement with the enemy was at Pittsburg Landing, April 6, 1862. It made a fine record and was mustered out at Detroit, June 18, 1865. The rendezvous of Battery C was at Grand Rapids, but none of its original officers were from Kent county. It left for the field in the Western army, Dec. 17, 1861. It had a busy and useful term of service, participated in engagements in most of the Southern States, and was mustered out at Detroit, June 22, 1865. Battery K was also organized at Grand Rapids, and was here mustered into the service, Feb. 20, 1863. It was composed chiefly, if not wholly, of volunteers of German descent. It was a gallant and useful corps, and was engaged during the war on duty in fortifications and on gunboats and transports, and saw much hard service. It was mustered out at Detroit, July 12, 1865. The Thirteenth battery, organized at Grand Rapids, went into the United States service, Jan. 28, 1864. The most of its service was in forts and fortifications, in the vicinity of Washington. After the assassination of President Lincoln, it assisted in the arrest of the conspirators, Harold and Mudd. It was mustered out of service, July 1, 1865.

Did space permit, it would be a pleasure to include the names and service of the "men who bore the guns," many of whom performed feats of daring and services of incalculable value to the cause, wholly prompted by the innate desire for national preservation, and without the hope of official reward. Some even declined promotion on the conscientious ground that they would then be serving for the emoluments and honors of office, while the charge would be groundless if the salary remained at thirteen dollars a month! Such conduct as this, it seems, should be a sufficient refutation of the latter-day doctrine that greed is the only incentive to human exertion. There were representatives of Kent county in nearly every regiment organized in Western Michigan, either by original enlistment, transfer, or promotion, and wherever they were, and by whatever organization they were known, the famous Wolverines always performed their duty, and reflected honor upon themselves and credit upon the noble State which they represented. The following is a list, approximately correct, of those reported as dead, wounded or captured while in active service in the Civil War: William Ackerson, Hezekiah Aickly, Richard Alcott, Silas Aldrich, George Ames, Chandler Andrew, James Andrew, Orlin A. Andrus, Henry L. Arnold, Benjamin A. Austin, Truman J. Bacon, Charles A. Bailey, Jonathan Bailey, Jutson D. Bailey, John Bain, John Baird, Andrew Barbar, Marcus H. Barker, George H. Barker, William N. Barnard, George H. Barnes, Burt Barnett, Charles E. Barr, James G. Bateman, Austin Bates, William F. Bates, Ira C. Baxter, Theophilus B. Baxter, Henry Beach, Jacob



Beasler, Henry P. Beckwith, Christian Behler, Emir A. Bell, Robert Bell, James Bement, Henry A. Bennett, S. Benson, Alonzo S. Berry, Joseph Berry, Amos Bessey, Loren C. Bingham, Abraham Bishop, Moses H. Black, James Blackall, Alonzo Blackmore, Rufus W. Bliss, Hiram Blood, Theodore Bloomis, Charles Bloss, Seth A. Boynton, L. Byron Brewer, Alvin Briggs, Wm. H. Briggs, Wm. F. Brockway, Charles Brownman, Wm. M. Brockway, Albert Brown, Charles H. Brown, James Brown, James Bruce, Robert Bruton, George Bryant, Lorenzo Buckley, Chas. E. Buck, Daniel Bugel, Cyrus W. Bullen, Henry C. Burhams, M. Bullis, Chas. B. Burness, Patrick Burns, Simeon Bush, E. Butler, Edwards Butters, Oscar Bylsma, A. Caldwell, Henry Camp, Isaac Camp, Angus Campbell, James Campbell, Julius O. Campbell, Nicholas Canton, John Cantwell, William L. Caper, Henry W. Carpenter, Septimus Carlton, James Carroll, John Carroll, Job Carter, Jeremiah Cary, Alonzo Case, Noah Casner, A. I. Cathcart, Theodore A. Chapin, Alphonso D. Cheney, Rufus Cheney, George J. S. Chesebro, James Christopherson, Benjamin B. Church, Howard P. Church, Henry Clark, Josiah F. Clark, Julius H. Clark, J. P. Clarke, Amos C. Classon, David Cline, Albert Clute, George W. Cluts, F. M. Coats, P. Coburn, Alexander Cole, James Congdon, Thomas Conger, A. H. Coon, Jesse Coon, George Corporan, Anson B. Corwin, William L. Coughtry, James Cowan, Hugh Cox, David A. Cramer, William H. Cranston, Charles Crauss, Francis M. Crawford, Abraham Cresfield, John F. Crysler, Oliver Culber, George Culver, Harvey S. Curtis, Richard Cusser, Silas W. Cutter, John W. Cuykendall, Hiram Daily, William H. Daniels, Byron J. Dart, Orson O. David, John E. Davis, Thomas A. Davis, William D. Davis, William M. Davis, Frederick Deal, Isaac Dean, Abraham Dees, John L. DeGrot, Eben Delano, David A. Dennison, James Dexter, George Dillenback, Samuel Dodge, Asa Douglass, Daniel Draper, William P. Draper, Edward S. Drew, John P. DuKruif, Emery Durham, Thomas A. Edie, James Eddy, Henry Ellis, James W. Ammons, Milo Ensign, Lyman Evans, John W. Ewing, David A. Farnum, George W. Fay, Henry E. Filkins, Hiram Filly, Morris E. Fitch, Allen Ford, Alvin R. Ford, John A. Fox, William H. Fox, Isaac Francis, William A. Francisco, John Frederick, John L. Free, Albert Freeman, George W. French, Charles H. Frost, Alvin Fuller, Lucien B. Fullington, Joel W. Gardner, A. H. Garrett, Robert Gilden, Eugene Gillam, Charles B. Gilman, John Gingery, George Girdler, Benj. F. Gitchell, Henry Globe, A. C. Godfroy, Isaac W. Godfroy, Morey Godfroy, Warren D. Godfroy, William P. Gold, Henry L. Gore, Judson A. Gouldsberry, Lafayette Grain, Lebbeus P. Graves, Warner Green, William Green, Martin Greenman, Henry W. Griffin, August Gruths, James Gunigal, Clark Hall, William Halsey, Eli Hamblin, William Hamblin, John Hanna, Henry Hardenburg, William Harger, William C. Harlan, John Harper, Samuel Harrington, Jared V. Harrison, Lewis Hartman, Francis I. Hartwell, George Harwick, Abram V. Hawk, Daniel Hayes, Warren Heald, James Hefferan, Charles Helmer, Elisha Helsel, Ira Helsel, Welcome E. Herrendon, William N. Herrington, Henry H. Hickcox, Frank P. Hildreth, Charles G. Hilton, Rufus A. Hilton, William Himmelberger, John Hinkle, Cyrus Hadley, Alpheus Holcomb, Americus Holden, Thomas Hollington, Washington Holmes, Estil W. Holt, Joseph E.



Hooper, James Hoose, Martin House, Samuel Hughes, Burdell C. Irons, Charles W. Irons, Judson Irons, Jasper Jacobs, Casper Jenner, Leander Jewell, John Jinks, Edward Johnson, Guy Johnson, Harvey Johnson, Mark Johnson, Richard Johnson, William W. Johnson, Hugh Kearney, Curtis L. Keeney, Francis Kelly, Charles E. Kennedy, John Kennedy, Jon Kennedy, Fred S. Kettle, Henry F. Kimbert, John M. Knapp, William H. Knapp, Webster J. Kniffin, Andrew I. Konkling, Jacob Kugers, Robert H. Lamberton, Abram A. Lawyer, Henry Lawyer, John B. Leach, John Leclair, Robert Lee, Anson Lewis, James Lind, Erastus R. Linsley, John Livingston, Monroe Livingston, Henry C. Lock, Charles H. Louder, Isaac Lovell, Joseph Lozo, Dennis Lynch, John Lynch, John Lynd, George R. Lyon, Berdan McCall, Charles McCarty, Thomas C. McConnel, D. McDermott, I. McDonald, Arthur McDougal, Jacob McFall, Jonas McFall, Adam McGarvey, Michael McGrath, John McHough, Ivan McLain, Stewart J. McLane, Neil McLean, Peter McLean, Samuel McMurray, Duncan McNaughton, Horace McNitt, Finley McPhearson, Nathan E. Mallory, David A. Marsh, Orville Marsh, Alonzo R. Martin, John W. Marvin, James Mashkum, James Mathews, Anthony D. Matthews, Augustus Mauranski, O. Mayfield, Harvey H. Mead, John Mead, Milton M. Merrifield, Jacob Miers, Abraham Miller, Charles Miller, George W. Miller, Robert W. Miller, James Misner, Thomas V. Mitchell, John Moffit, Samuel Montague, Alfred D. Moore, Benjamin F. Morey, Charles B. Morey, Homer H. Morgan, Mortimer W. Mormon, John M. Morris, Allen Morse, Joseph Morse, Timothy J. Mosher, David Munthorn, John Murony, Michael Murphy, William Murray, Charles Myers, Henry I. Myers, Ira A. Nash, Flavius J. Neal, John Nellis, Henry J. Nesbitt, James W. Newson, Merritt Newton, William Newton, Miner S. Nicholas, David Noble, Otheviah F. Norman, John O'Brien, Elon Oneans, Samuel B. Osgood, Charles F. Page, George W. Parker, George F. Patten, John B. Pearsall, Francis Pelton, Theodore F. Peterson, Reuben Petty, Bennett Phillips, James B. Pierce, Aaron R. Piersons, Auston Pixley, Jacob Plaster, Henry Pool, Fred Porter, Henry B. Potter, John Potter, William W. Potter, Frederick Propardet, Charles E. Provin, James I. Provin, George W. Pyle, Purdy Ramslar, Alfred A. Randall, Lafayette Randall, Almeron D. Rathbun, Edwin Rathbun, Jacob Rectenwald, Henry S. Reed, Luman O. Reed, Joel Rexford, John Rexford, Oliver Rhodes, Samuel L. Rice, Charles L. Richards, Francis D. Richardson, Abram Richmire, Charles H. Richmond, Edmond Rioridan, Isaac W. Roberts, George Robertson, James Robinson, Ezra J. Rogers, Rennes Rogers, Richard Rolands, Abram Rosel, William R. Roswell, Cady Rowley, Charles A. Russell, Otis H. Russell, Peter Rykert, Thomas A. Sapwell, Dennis Scagel, William F. Schenk, James Sears, Wilson B. Seymour, Hiram Shuman, Alfred Shirk, William Shoemaker, Frank Shoff, William F. Sibley, William S. Simmons, James W. Sims, Major Slater, William I. Slayton, Robert Sleigh, James W. Sligh, George H. Sliter, Joseph T. Sliter, John Smalley, Alfred E. Smith, Amos A. Smith, Charles D. Smith, Chauncey Smith, Daniel Smith, Denton Smith, Denton Smith, Edgar W. Smith, Erson H. Smith, Eugene Smith, George W. Smith, Lucas M. Smith, William Smith, Horace B. Smoke, James H. Soules, Thomas C. Soules, Har-



risson C. Soules, Warren V. Soules, Cornelius Spaulding, George V. Spearback, Ethan E. Squiers, Samuel C. Squiers, Reuben F. Stanley, Thomas Stanton, Jacob Stark, Cyrus B. Steele, Elisha Steele, H. Steneca, Richard Sterling, Morris Stevenson, John H. Stewart, Lyman D. Stilwell, George W. Story, Seth Streeter, Henry Strong, James A. Taber, Matthew Tancred, Orange Taylor, Allen Thayer, Henry H. Thurston, Samuel T. Tole, George Tower, Henry C. Tower, Dwight Towsley, James R. Treadway, George Trescit, L. C. Truax, Almon H. Tubbs, Lorenzo D. Tubbs, John W. Tyler, William D. Upson, E. Vandecan, James Van Dusen, Philip Van Dusen, ——— Van Etten, Cornelius Vanlieu, Benjamin Van Norman, George Van Wie, Henry Wait, George D. Walker, James C. Wallace, Reuben Walters, Henry Ward, Daniel H. Warren, James W. Washburne, Willard Washburne, Stephen Waters, Henry G. Watson, John Webster, Darwin D. Weeks, Charles Wegal, John West, George W. White, Henry White, John White, Norman G. White, Samuel White, Jr., Thomas Whitfield, Solon M. Whitney, William G. Whitworth, Nathan Wilkes, Milo Willard, Daniel M. Williams, George C. Williams, George W. Williams, Nathaniel N. Williams, James F. Wilson, John Wirtz, Joel Wolcott, Lawrence S. Wolcott, Abram Wolf, Jackson Wood, John H. Wood, Selden Wood, William Wood, Albern O. Woodward, Alonzo Worden, W. H. Worden, Andrew C. Wright, Julius M. Wright, Silas A. Yerkes, Jasper I. Younger, Franklin E. Youngs.

#### SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

In the Spring of 1898 came the declaration of war between the United States and Spain, and the equipment of an army and navy to combat the haughty Spaniard. In the settlement of this trouble Kent county responded with old-time vigor and enthusiasm. The noble sons of patriotic sires promptly offered their services in the cause of liberty and performed their duty with commendable devotion. The response was so universal over the land that many were disappointed in not reaching the scene of action, but they had shown their devotion to country and sympathy with the down-trodden and oppressed. The Kent county boys, mostly members of Companies B, G, E and H, of the Thirty-second Michigan infantry, were off to the rendezvous at the earliest opportunity. They returned after a few months of service, but were dissatisfied that they could not have done more. A grand reception was accorded to the companies on their return, and then their members resumed the thread of peaceful life. A few Kent county men reached the scene of action in the Philippines, where they rendered valiant service and proved their worthiness on every field.

#### IN THE GREAT WORLD WAR

Following the close of the Spanish-American trouble and during the period of peace which ensued, the militia companies of Grand Rapids maintained their organizations and increased their efficiency. Hoping always for peace, they prepared themselves for any emergency, and when the trouble on the Mexican border occurred they responded with alacrity to the call of the Government. Their service on the border was distinguished by loyalty and fidelity, and when they returned home they received an enthusiastic reception from an admiring people.



Even then the world war clouds were visible above the American horizon, and in a short time we were to become a participant in the most terrific military contest ever waged in behalf of human liberty. Events followed each other in rapid succession, and when the official declaration of war was made, on April 6, 1917, Grand Rapids and Kent county were ready to respond to any demand that might be made upon them. The organized militia companies were placed upon a war basis and they soon again became a part of the fighting forces of the United States. At the time of this writing (Sept., 1918), the valor of Kent county soldiers has been exhibited on the battlefields of France, and the golden stars on the service flags in the county, tokens of the supreme sacrifice, attest their heroic conduct. Aside from the five militia organizations, Grand Rapids has furnished two field hospital units, and the various enlistments, including every branch of service, shows a total late in July, 1918, of 10,285, divided as follows: In the army, 6,681; battallion, 654; navy, 1,278; marines, 168; naval reserves, 855; United States ambulance company, No. 15, 124; Red Cross hospital corps Q, 81; Polish army, 130; British-Canadian, 162; United States coast guard, 52. And these are in addition to the grand national selected army, which system was adopted for the first time in this country upon our entrance as a participant in the great world war. Ending with the July call, 3,231 selected men had entered the service from Kent county and the response to the government's calls have been cheerful and enthusiastic.

Thus far the record of Grand Rapids and Kent county in the world war has been glorious and in keeping with the record of Civil war days. The casualty lists are scanned each day, for Kent county troops are on the firing line in France and Flanders, where they will remain until victory is achieved and Democracy is triumphant over Autocracy. At this writing the following named Grand Rapids soldiers have made the "supreme sacrifice" and their names have been indelibly inscribed upon the Nation's

#### ROLL OF HONOR

- Carl Hootkins, naval service, died in Colorado, June 19, 1917.
- Joseph M. Pieszko, died at Waco, Tex., Oct. 12.
- Charles A. Gillis, killed in action with Canadians, Nov. 24.
- Reginald S. Franchot, died at Fort Worth, Tex., Dec. 27.
- William S. Mierow, died at Camp McArthur, Jan. 18, 1918.
- Frank S. Ellis, died at Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., Jan. 26.
- Maurice L. Davis, died at Quantico, Va., Feb. 12.
- Alfred W. Brake, died at Chelsea, Mass., Feb. 17.
- William Sears, died at Chelsea, Mass., Feb. 19.
- William Merizon, died at Eagle Pass, Tex., Feb. 24.
- Neal Fonger, died at Norfolk, Va., March 1.
- Philip Wood, Canadian army, died at Brainshott, England, Mar. 1.
- Horace Grover Caster, died at Kelly field, Fort Sam Houston, Tex., March 5.
- George Willemsen, killed in an accident in France, March 19.
- Joseph W. Malewitz, reported missing when destroyer Manley was sunk in collision in European waters.
- John Hiemstra, died at Columbus barracks, Columbus, Ohio, April 3.



- Ralph Van Zanten, died of pneumonia in France, April 3.  
Howard Leroy Cudahy, drowned on Florence H., April 28.  
Carl Edward Wilmes, died at Camp Custer, April 29.  
J. Alexander Bayne, killed in an aerial crash in France, May 8.  
Everett D. Crocker, died at Camp Custer, May 9.  
Kenneth A. Nelson, aviation accident in England, May 24.  
Harry Judson Webster, killed in aeroplane accident at Fort Worth, Tex., June 4.  
Joseph M. Todd, killed in action in France, June 10.  
John S. Smith, died of illness in France, June 12.  
Harry E. Fonger, killed in action in France, June 12.  
John Ostrowski, killed in action in France, June 17.  
Edgar G. Tomlinson, in France, June 21.  
Wesley N. Keller, killed in action in France, June 26.  
Ray H. Parmalee, killed in action in France, June 26.  
Carl A. Johnson, killed in action in France, July 1.  
James W. Sziekarskas, killed in action in France, July 1.  
Clyde Gillespie, died of disease in France, July 6.  
Joseph W. Korskey, in France, July 16.  
George A. E. Sifton, July 18.  
Charles E. Cunningham, died in France, of wounds received in action, July 19.  
N. S. Hudlha, in France, July 21.  
Ralph McMillan, in France, July 22.  
Orra L. Snyder, in France, July 27.  
Clare E. Mosher, in France, July 27.  
Edward C. Doyle, killed in aeroplane accident at Ardmore, Okla., July 28.  
Joseph K. Clark, in France, July 29.  
Harold J. Christie, in France, July 30.  
Bernard Van't Hof, died of wounds received in action in France, Aug. 4.  
George A. Allen, in France, Aug. 5.  
Daniel W. Cassard, killed in action in France, Aug. 15.  
Edward D. Sullivan, in France, Aug. 22.  
Harold J. Payette, killed in action in France, Aug. 22.  
Ivan C. Hamilton, in France, Aug. 28.  
Arthur D. DeVries, killed in action in France, Aug. 28.  
Adrian E. Roodvoets, killed in action in France, Aug. 28.  
William A. Wilmerink, in France, Aug. 29.  
Gordon M. Crothers, in France, Aug. 29.  
Frederick W. Evans, killed in accident at Cheyenne, Wyo., Aug. 30.  
William Huff, in France, Aug. 30.  
Joseph Pray, in France, Aug. 30.  
W. C. Brinkman, in France, Aug. 30.  
Lionel H. Gardiner, killed in accident in the navy at Virginia Beach, Va., Sept. 2.  
J. B. Coulson, in France, Sept. 10.  
Charles Deering, killed in action in France, Sept. 19.  
Richard Mazereuw, killed in action in France, Sept. 20.  
Irving J. Freeman, died in Grand Rapids, Sept. 20.

A temporary memorial to its soldier dead in the great war was dedicated, Friday, Sept. 27, 1918. The memorial consists of two square pillars on each side of the main Fulton street entrance to Fulton park. A large flag was suspended between the pylons, and the names of those in whose memory the city erected the monument are inscribed on the four sides of each column. After the war a permanent memorial will be erected.

The Rev. C. W. Merriam, who was in France as a Y. M. C. A. worker, gives an account of the fighting around Chateau Thierry, in which Grand Rapids troops distinguished themselves. The reverend gentleman is authority for the statement that the Grand Rapids boys "have made the finest record of any unit in any army in the four years of the war. They advanced twenty-two kilometers in five days with the crack Prussian guard opposing them, and they did it on rifles, bayonets and nerve, for they had almost no planes, no 75's and never even saw a tank. They did it with their kitchen trains twenty-seven miles in the rear and they did it with only eleven wooden crosses to show the cost. I personally counted seventy-seven machine gun placements within a quarter of a mile and the boys cleaned up those nests when it was impossible to imagine anyone getting through alive. They did it on short notice, too, for they were hurried to the front in motor-cars from a point fifty miles away. The horses couldn't keep up with the men and many of them dropped and died of exhaustion while the men went on. One of the artillery officers told me that the longest time his outfit was in any one spot in all those three days of fighting was twenty minutes. No sooner would they get located and begin sending shells over them than the word would be brought up that they must hurry on, for they were holding the infantry's advance. The infantry went on until they were told they simply must stop at Vesle in order to save the line. And all the time the Hun planes were dropping machine gun bullets on them and they had no planes to fight back. We hear much of the big British advance before the tanks, but our men had no tanks to help them."

"Chateau-Thierry is a precious spot to us because it was the place where American courage was first tried and the answer given once for all," Mr. Merriam said in describing the scene of the victory of the Grand Rapids boys and their comrades. "I believe it will take its place beside Concord Bridge, Liberty Hall, and Mount Vernon in American history."

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## CHAPTER XLIV

### ODDS AND ENDS

COMING OF THE DUTCH SETTLERS—RAILROADS—HORTICULTURE AND POMOLOGY—SALT, GYPSUM, ETC.—TELEPHONE—WATER POWER—A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT—"DEACON" CONVERSE—LADIES' LITERARY CLUB—ST. CECELIA SOCIETY—GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC—SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT—PICRIC ACID PLANT—A FEW IMPORTANT FACTS.

On Oct. 1, 1887, several Holland families in Grand Rapids celebrated, at the residence of Jacob Quintus, the thirtieth anniversary of their landing in America, with the Van Realte colony, and this



called to mind the fact that one of the great events of the year 1847, in the Grand River Valley, was the coming of the Dutch settlers. These sturdy immigrants, with their descendants, now form a considerable portion of the population of Grand Rapids and Kent county, as well as of Ottawa county, and it may be well to consider briefly the coming of an element which has added so much to the moral integrity and intellectual progress of the community. According to a well written article by Martin L. D'Ooge, published in Volume 38 of the Pioneer Collections, the cause of this immigration was religious persecution. The effort to impose a State religion upon the Hollanders, who had become accustomed to think and act for themselves in religious matters, was very irksome and annoying, and the zeal with which the government sought to enforce conformity was worthy of a better cause. The persecution which these people suffered for freedom of conscience and religious belief are comparable in some respects to the terrors of the Inquisition and the days of the Salem witchcraft persecutions. Among those who so suffered and were cast into prison was one Dr. Albertus C. Van Raalte, and under his leadership a little band of the Christian Reformed church, or as it was later known, the Seceded Reformed church, decided to leave the fatherland and to undergo the hardships of the pioneer, with freedom, rather than to enjoy the comforts of the old home, with spiritual slavery or persecution. Their choice quite naturally first fell upon the Dutch colony in Java and they decided to go there, providing the government would guarantee freedom of conscience in the new home. A narrow spirit of bigotry then prevailed with the government and the request was denied. The remaining haven was the United States, known to all the world as the home of the free. It is related that in this predicament, Van Raalte and his coadjutor, Brummelkamp, addressed a letter at Arnheim, on May 25, 1846, to "the faithful in the United States of North America." This general address was given, as they knew of no one person to whom to write, and the letter was entrusted to an emigrant and fell into the hands of Dr. I. N. Wyckoff, of Albany, N. Y. He proved a true friend and caused a translation of the letter to be printed in the Christian Intelligencer. The letter caused widespread interest and resulted in the formation of a society at Albany to aid in the immigration of these persecuted people. Van Raalte, after some correspondence, set sail from Rotterdam, Oct. 2, 1846, arrived in New York after a journey of forty-five days, and proceeded to Albany. It was the first intention to settle in Wisconsin, but while in New York, according to an article written by Mrs. Etta Smith Wilson and published in Volume 30 of the Pioneer Collections, Mr. Van Raalte met a countryman who had traveled extensively in the Western States, and who asked him why he wished to go into the absolute wilderness of Wisconsin. He advised him to go to Michigan, which already had railroads, was developing rapidly and was near to market. After lingering in Albany a short time Van Raalte set out on a journey of exploration to Michigan, traveling overland from Detroit to Allegan, where he was given a cordial welcome by Mr. and Mrs. John R. Kellogg. From this point he prospected, reaching the present site of Holland City, in January, 1847. Here he found the Presbyterian mission, conducted by Rev. O. N. Smith, and a number



of Indians. Used to the canals of Holland, this location on Black Lake particularly appealed to Van Raalte and he decided upon this as the seat of the colony and returned to Detroit. Members of the party who had been awaiting his decision, at Albany, joined him and a number of men and one woman arrived at the present site of Holland in February, 1847. They were, later, joined by others, and in 1848 Zeeland was settled by a colony from Goes, Holland, under the leadership of Rev. C. Vander Meulen. J. Steketee was the leader of a second party which joined this colony and J. Vander Vanden Luyster of a third. They came not as individual immigrants, but as members of colonies and largely under the direction of their pastors, who later assumed a guidance in civil affairs which was resented as the new citizens became more imbued with the American spirit. The descendants of these colonists and later immigrants now number more than a quarter of a million and form, perhaps, the largest single element in Western Michigan civilization. With the provincialism, which seems inherent in all mankind, the Dutch, with their peculiar ways and old-world customs, met with ridicule and derision, as well as with kindness, and their earlier years were none too pleasant; but by their thrift and honesty they earned their high place in the community. As early as January, 1847, the Grand Rapids Enquirer spoke of the possibility of Dutch immigration to the Grand River Valley and urged them to come, saying they were a "body of men induced to leave their native land by consideration of conscience, love of free schools and free speech." And, in February, it was announced that lands had been purchased in Ottawa county, on the north bank of Black river, and that several hundred immigrants were in the East and would come with the opening of navigation. Strange as it may seem, however, no other reference to the coming of the Hollanders is made in the Grand Rapids Enquirer of that year.

But it was from those colonies and their descendants that Grand Rapids drew the large Dutch element of its present population; and a glance through the city directory will disclose the fact that many other nationalities here find a haven of refuge from old-world persecutions. Grand Rapids is a veritable "melting pot" of foreign nationalities, but despite this fact the records show that 52 per cent of its population own their own homes, a condition that is not surpassed by more than one city of equal population in the United States.

#### RAILROADS—STEAM AND ELECTRIC

Agitation of projects for securing a railroad into Grand Rapids began in 1845, when the growing hamlet was only twelve years old. On June 25 of that year the citizens held a meeting and resolved to petition the legislature for a charter for a railroad from Battle Creek to Grand Rapids. On Dec. 1, following, at another meeting, it was resolved that application be made for a railroad from Port Huron, or some point on the St. Clair river, to Grand Haven. In 1846, the legislature granted charters, severally, from Jackson, Battle Creek, and Kalamazoo, to Grand Rapids, but there was little practical result for several years. However, the general demand for a railroad from somewhere grew more and more imperative until, in the Spring of



1853, active work began on what was then called the Oakland & Ottawa railroad. In 1855, by consolidation, this became known as the Detroit & Milwaukee railroad, and the arrival of cars over this route, in July, 1858, was an occasion of much interest and of very considerable rejoicing among the pioneers of that day. The Lake Shore & Michigan Southern was the next railroad to reach the city, and it came in 1869, the construction having been pushed from Kalamazoo by way of Allegan, with great energy and celerity, by Ransom Gardner, from which circumstance it was familiarly known in those days as "The Gardner Road." Early in the winter of 1856 the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company—which had been organized to construct a railroad from Hartford City, Ind., to the Michigan state line, and had later decided to continue the road to Grand Rapids and beyond—petitioned Congress to grant land aid, to make possible the construction of the road from Grand Rapids to the Straits of Mackinaw. Instead of a land grant direct to the railroad companies the grant was made to the State of Michigan and the bill was approved by President Pierce, July 3, 1856. By act of the legislature, in 1857, this land grant was transferred to the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company. After many discouraging delays, the tracks from the south were completed to Grand Rapids, Sept. 13, 1870, and the entire line, from Fort Wayne, Ind., to Petoskey, Mich., was finished on Nov. 24, 1873. In 1886 the company projected an "air-line" branch to Muskegon, and on Dec. 1, of the same year, it was open for business, thus bringing that important port on the west side of Lake Michigan within about an hour's ride of Grand Rapids. The Grand Rapids & Indiana railroad was one of the chief factors in the development of Northern Michigan, and it is interesting to note in this connection that the land included in the Congressional grant was sold to actual settlers at an average price of almost precisely \$12 per acre, the highest average price ever paid for railroad grant lands in America.

The Michigan Central railroad was built from Jackson to Grand Rapids in 1869, and was then known as the Grand River Valley railroad. The first train from Jackson over this line arrived, Jan. 1, 1870.

The Grand Rapids, Newaygo & Lake Shore Railroad Company was organized, Sept. 11, 1869, and completed a line from Grand Rapids to White Cloud, Sept. 24, 1875. A road from Holland to this city was opened, Jan. 6, 1872, and these lines with their connections became known as the Chicago & West Michigan railway. The Grand Rapids, Lansing & Detroit division of the Detroit, Lansing & Northern railroad was opened between Grand Rapids and Lansing, in July, 1888, and in December, 1896, the Detroit, Grand Rapids & Western Railroad Company was formed and operated the line until it was merged into the Pere Marquette system, Jan. 1, 1900, together with the Chicago & West Michigan, the Detroit, Grand Haven & Western, and the Lowell & Hastings railroads.

The Grand Rapids, Grand Haven & Muskegon Electric Railroad Company was organized, March 6, 1899, and on Feb. 1, 1902, it ran its first cars between Grand Rapids and Muskegon. On June 18, 1903, it first ran cars into Grand Haven, where it connects with a line of lake steamers. This road does a large business and is a great aid to the traveling public.



The Grand Rapids, Holland & Chicago Railroad Company was organized in 1901, and it operates an electric line from Grand Rapids through Holland to Macatawa Park and Saugatuck. The first car ran over the line from Holland to Grand Rapids, in September, 1901, and in 1902 it inaugurated a fast express between Grand Rapids and Chicago, connecting with the Graham & Morton boat line. The road runs through the "fruit belt" and in season does a large business in transporting fruit to market. A line to Kalamazoo completes the list of electric roads which makes the Grand Rapids the center in this respect of a considerable sized territory.

The original movement for the establishing of a street railway in Grand Rapids was made by William A. Richmond, John W. Peirce, Henry Grinnell, William H. Withey and others, who, on May 19, 1864, secured the passing of an ordinance by the Common Council which gave them the right to construct a street railway from the Detroit & Milwaukee railway station down old Canal and up Monroe and Fulton street as far as Jefferson avenue. This charter was repealed, Oct. 11, 1864, and a new one passed, granting similar privileges to George Jerome, of Detroit; Daniel Owen, of New York, and Thomas S. Sprague, of Saginaw. The cars were started, May 10, 1865, and the Monroe avenue line was the only railway until the summer of 1873, when the Division avenue line to the old fair grounds on Hall street at Jefferson avenue, was constructed, and cars began running there early in September of that year. In 1875 a line to Reed's Lake was put into operation. From the lake it came down Sherman and East streets, Wealthy avenue, Lagrave, Monroe, Division and Lyon and through Bond street. Within the ensuing ten years lines were built in Scribner, Stocking and West Bridge streets, crossing both the Bridge and Pearl street bridges in their connection. They were all consolidated into a single corporation in August, 1885, and the new arrangement brough all the lines constructed prior to 1886 under one control.

On February 16, 1885, an ordinance was passed granting a franchise for the construction of a cable railway in Lyon, Union and Michigan streets. The first one completed was in Lyon street, from the foot to Grand avenue, and horse car lines in connection were constructed from the foot of Lyon to Market and down Grandville avenue to the south city line; also across Fulton street bridge to the west city lines, and one north from Lyon on Barclay avenue. The horse car branches were running in October, 1887, and the cable in Lyon street was drawn to place, April 13, 1888; grip cars ran on the 16th and soon began regular trips. Some seven miles of roadway were completed, and on April 24, 1891, an ordinance was passed by the Common Council permitting the two street railway companies to consolidate and discontinue certain parallel lines. In July, 1891, the consolidation was completed and the street railway system of Grand Rapids became known as the Consolidated Street Railway Company of Grand Rapids. Electricity was substituted as a motive power and the cable and horse soon disappeared. A steam railway extending north of the city, past the Soldiers' Home to the bank of Grand River was later made an electric line and added to the system, being afterward extended to Comstock Park.



## HORTICULTURE AND POMOLOGY

On the high grounds of Kent county the cultivation of peaches is quite as successful as in any part of the State, and the cultivation of apples and other fruits in this vicinity is also profitable. The fruits of this region have been awarded a considerable number of premiums by the orchard committee of the State Pomological Society, and at the exhibit of the Society at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876, the Grand River Horticultural Society contributed a general collection of fruit, which elicited much commendation. The Hon. Henry Fralick, of Grand Rapids, was one of the Board of Managers who represented Michigan at the Centennial exhibition and to his efforts were due largely the prominence which the Michigan fruit exhibit there attained, and from that year may be dated the general knowledge of the superiority of the Michigan fruit belt. Its product was easily the prime favorite at that exhibition.

Among the enthusiasts in the matter of fruit culture in past years may be mentioned the Hon. Robert D. Graham, who served as secretary of the Grand River Horticultural Society, in 1883-85, and Jonathan P. Thompson, a newspaper writer, connected at one time with the Enquirer and later with the Eagle. Later in life he devoted his time chiefly to the promotion of the interests of horticulture and pomology in the state, originated the idea of a State Pomological Society, and upon his death that society adopted resolutions of tribute to his memory and directed the procuring of his portrait to be placed among the archives. The Hon. Charles W. Garfield early turned his attention to horticulture, and as a young man was four years in charge of the farm department of the Detroit Free Press. From 1875 to 1889 he was secretary of the State Horticultural Society, and then became a member of the Executive Board. In 1885 he was elected secretary of the American Pomological Society. His reports of the transactions of the State Horticultural Society comprise several volumes of much merit and value. In his "Brief of Horticulture" he says there is no one branch of horticulture that takes precedence in Kent county, although the peach and small fruit interests are very large. The Baldwin and Northern Spy are the leading market apples. The peach crop is not as certain as upon the lake shore, but many thousands of bushels are marketed from the orchards about Grand Rapids.

At the Columbian Exposition, held at Chicago in 1893, the products of Kent county farms and factories were again on display, and upon the Board of Managers again there was a Grand Rapids citizen in the person of E. B. Fisher. As the result of the pomological display at this exposition Kent county and Western Michigan became more widely as well as favorably known for the excellent quality and enormous quantity of fruits there produced.

## SALT, GYPSUM, ETC.

Somewhat in detail in preceding pages has been told the story of the efforts of the Hon. Lucius Lyon to develop the salt industry of Grand Rapids. Although unsuccessful, he doubtless attracted attention to the State and this contributed largely to the development of the salt industry of Michigan, which now annually produces some 60 per

cent of the entire product of the United States. And the efforts to produce salt here unquestionably led to the exploration and development of the Grand Rapids plaster beds and the discovery of the gypsum strata which underlie this region. The first gypsum quarry was opened about 1849, and the manufacture of stucco or calcined plaster from gypsum was thereby early commenced. And this trade has been a very important factor in the business of Grand Rapids and its vicinity. In the early years of the industry, and in fact up to about 1880, or later, two-thirds of the output from Kent county was in land plaster, and the minor portion in calcined plaster or stucco. But in the later years the proportions have been about reversed. The Alabastine Company was organized in New York, in 1879, by Melvin B. Church, who was its manager for a number of years. It has offices in this city and mills outside, its plant being the largest of its kind in the world. Alabastine is an article of which calcined gypsum is the base, made to take the place of calcimine in wall coatings and finish.

### THE TELEPHONE

A good many Grand Rapids people visited the Centennial exposition at Philadelphia, in its last month, and saw or heard of the wonderful new invention, the telephone. So, when "Deacon" Converse connected the Grand Rapids Plaster Company's city office with the plaster quarry just southwest of the city with 'phones, there was at once very great curiosity about and interest in them, and crowds who had heard of the telephone at the Centennial greeted with much enthusiasm what are said to have been the first pair of 'phones brought into Michigan. They are yet among the treasures of the Plaster Company. Later, when a telephone and telegraph construction company was established in Grand Rapids, in October, 1879, as a branch of the Michigan Telephone Company of Detroit—later the Michigan State Bell Telephone Company—it was warmly welcomed and generously patronized; indeed it was said in those days, when the plant was fully developed with but few less than 1,500 'phones, that it was the largest service, per capita, in the United States—which was the largest in the world. At this time, about Jan. 1, 1895, Michigan had the largest telephone development of any state in the United States, save one, Iowa, with a very few more than 13,000 'phones in use.

In the Fall of 1894, several prominent Grand Rapids citizens, among them the late Hon. William J. Stuart, the late S. B. Jenks, the late Hon. Cyrus E. Perkins, and the Hon. Charles R. Sligh, began an agitation for a new, local telephone company, and applied to the Common Council for a franchise, to be granted to "S. B. Jenks and others hereafter to be associated with him." The franchise was granted, and later, about June 1, 1895, the Citizens' Telephone Company was formally launched with an authorized capital of \$100,000, with E. B. Fisher as president, C. F. Rood as vice-president, Amos S. Musselman as secretary, W. J. Stuart as treasurer, and J. B. Ware as manager. There were twelve in the full board of directors. Thus and then was launched the first formidable effort at co-operation in this field of endeavor in the United States. The project was favored,



a large number of townspeople took stock, and it grew on their hands. The first pole was set, Oct. 2, 1895, and practical service was given in May, 1896. There were contracts for about 1,600 'phones, of which nearly 1,000 were in use, July 1, 1896, when regular service formally began. The reputation of the new venture spread abroad, and other communities, with trade and other connections with the city, desired similar experiences, which later were afforded. The Citizens' Company at this time is said to have been the largest system of its class and kind in the country, and was an exemplar visited by many people from all over the country—later, when still further development occurred, from all over the world. It had a fame beyond the United States, as well as in them.

About July 1, 1896, after the expiry of the basic patents, there were reported to be a little less than 340,000 'phones in the United States, which then, as now, had largely more than half of all in use in the world. The Citizens' Company now has more than 16,000 'phones in its Grand Rapids plant, somewhat more than 40,000 in its system, in other towns and counties in Western Michigan, and a gross investment of some \$5,000,000. Michigan has more 'phones in all than there were in the United States in 1896, and the whole country now has about 12,000,000 'phones in service! And in all of this wonderful and most advantageous change, Grand Rapids has had an honorable and somewhat conspicuous part.

On Jan. 9, 1904, the Grand Rapids city exchange of the Citizens' Company was changed from a manual to an automatic plant and for some time thereafter was the largest and most noted exchange of that type in the country. The company is distinctly a Grand Rapids enterprise, in its inception and development. About one-half of its 3,200 stockholders are Grand Rapids people, and their influence and example—the story of their achievements and the resulting advantages—have spread not only throughout this country, but in many foreign lands, and has attracted special visitors from them.

### WATER POWER

Among the early steps in the important improvements here in the early days of Grand Rapids was that taken by Lyon & Sargeant and their associates—the initial movement in the development of the water power at the rapids of Grand river. And in this is another evidence of the wonderful foresight of Lucius Lyon. When he and his associates undertook the construction of that mill race on the east side of the rapids they anticipated a profitable income, but they really builded wiser than they knew, in the foundation which they laid for the great industrial interests of Grand Rapids. This work was started, in 1835, and in its progress marred more fortunes than it made in the succeeding fifteen years, and until its full development. Yet a considerable number of energetic and hard working men began there the struggle which ultimately led to success and prominence. A companion piece to this is the west-side canal and water power improvement made thirty years later. In connection with these is the dam across Grand river, first built in 1849, some distance above where the present dam stands and rebuilt where it now is, in 1866. The large water power, utilized by use of the canals, which has been estimated

as high as 2,400 horsepower, turns a great many industrial wheels, gives employment to thousands of men and support to thousands of families, and contributes doubtless more largely than any other single factor to the development and value of the city's manufacturing interests.

#### A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

In the early city days old Canal street, between Pearl and Michigan, was very much lower than it is now, and in wet weather became almost impassable. It was finally decided to raise the grade about six feet and for this purpose a contract was let amounting to \$54,000. With the street thus elevated, the buildings, particularly on the west side of the roadway, from Pearl to Lyon streets, were much below the grade line and it was necessary to raise them. The one which stood at the Old National Bank corner, then known as Sweet's Hotel, was the largest of these buildings. To accomplish the feat of raising it, some 5,500 jackscrews were placed under it, and with a man stationed at each jackscrew the word of command was given and the building was thus soon raised to the required height.

#### "DEACON" CONVERSE

In the preceding pages occasional reference is made to James W. Converse, and, though he never claimed residence in Grand Rapids, his activities were of such nature and so extensive as to make a more extended mention of him appropriate. Mr. Converse was born in Thompson, Conn., Jan. 11, 1808, and when but thirteen years old left home and went to Boston, where he entered upon a successful and honorable career. He later became a member of a firm engaged in the hide and leather trade in Boston, and he remained so interested until 1870. He first visited Grand Rapids, June 3, 1850, to save to the American Baptist Missionary Union its rights in the property that had been the Baptist Indian Mission reserve on the west side of the river, south of Bridge street. In that he succeeded, and afterward purchased the property, which, in 1856, he caused to be platted and it became known as the Converse Addition. He also purchased an interest in the gypsum quarries and mills southwest of the city, and in 1856 a company was organized and later incorporated as the Grand Rapids Plaster Company, of which Mr. Converse was chosen president. In the Fall of 1857 he was one of the organizers of the Pearl Street Bridge Company and furnished most of the funds for the construction of the bridge, in 1858. He was also largely interested, financially and otherwise, in the construction of the first railroad from Kalamazoo, by way of Allegan, into Grand Rapids. He also furnished the funds for the construction of the railroad to Newaygo, taking and negotiating the bonds which matured July 1, 1891. He was president and principal owner of the Converse Manufacturing Company, having factory, stores and mills at Newaygo, and his work and investment hereabout contributed much to the growth and progress of Grand Rapids. He it was who brought the first pair of telephones for practical service to Grand Rapids, in 1877. Before their introduction a telegraph line had connected the city office of the gypsum company with its mills just southwest of the city limits, and



the pair superseded the "tickers." They were a marvelous curiosity to thousands in those days and became an impelling influence which later manifested itself in the remarkable development of telephone installation and service in Grand Rapids. Mr. Converse died at Boston, Mass., Aug. 22, 1894.

#### THE LADIES' LITERARY CLUB

In 1869, Mrs. S. L. Withey, while at Kalamazoo, was inspired by the work being done there, introduced by Mrs. Lucinda Stone. Upon her return, Mrs. Withey enlisted the interest of Mrs. L. D. Putman, Mrs. H. J. Hollister, and Mrs. S. L. Fuller, and a history class was organized. The first meeting was held in the Park Congregational church and Mrs. Stone, who was present by invitation, outlined plans for an organization. The greatest obstacle was the lack of reference books, and as a result, on March 21, 1870, the Ladies Library Association was organized; and this was the real beginning of the Ladies' Literary Club, which is one of the prominent societies of Grand Rapids and one of the leaders among the organizations of its kind in the United States. The account of the library that resulted from this organization is given in connection with that of the Grand Rapids Public Library. On April 10, 1873, a number of the ladies met for the formation of a literary club, of which Mrs. L. D. Putnam was chosen as the first president, Mrs. Z. E. Bliss as vice-president, Mrs. M. S. Crosby as treasurer, and Mrs. S. E. Torrey as secretary. Within a year there were 172 members, and in spite of some opposition the club continued to grow. The ladies took a prominent part in educational work, they promoted the establishment of a kindergarten, and in July, 1873, they presented a petition to the Board of Education relative to the building of school houses. Mrs. S. L. Withey was appointed representative to attend a Congress of Women held in Chicago, in October, 1874, and she brought back stirring news of the advancement of women, which filled the members with greater enthusiasm in their chosen work. The club at Grand Rapids was used as a model for the formation of similar clubs throughout the state. In 1876 a history of the club was prepared for the Centennial exhibition at Philadelphia and Dr. Francis A. Rutherford represented the club at the Women's National Convention, held in that city. The club was incorporated, in 1882, as "The Ladies' Literary Club of Grand Rapids," and in December, 1886, the advisability of buying a lot and building a club house was suggested. Lot 5 in Block 17 of Bostwick & Company's addition on Sheldon avenue between Island and Oakes streets, was purchased, the corner stone was laid with impressive ceremonies on July 30, 1887, and the building was finished and its doors opened to members on Dec. 31 of the same year. In 1891 the National Association for the Advancement of Women accepted the invitation extended by the ladies of Grand Rapids, and this meeting was largely attended by prominent women throughout the country, who greatly enjoyed the city's hospitality. The Ladies' Literary Club is an organization of which Grand Rapids is proud. It is the largest organization of its kind in the world and its name is known in every civilized country. By 1896 its fame had spread to such an extent that

Mrs. Perkins was a delegate to the meeting of the general federation of women's clubs, at Louisville, Ky., and gave a paper on "How the Ladies of Grand Rapids Built Their Club House." In the same year the club joined the State Federation of Clubs. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization was celebrated on April 10, 1897. The club has taken an interest in the literary and civic life of the city and many men and women of note from time to time have appeared upon its lecture platform. The literary work of many of its members has been of high order and has received nation-wide recognition.

#### THE ST. CECELIA SOCIETY

In September, 1883, Mrs. Ella Mathews Peirce conceived the idea of founding a woman's musical club, for the purpose of advancing the art among the music lovers of Grand Rapids, and she succeeded in obtaining the assistance of other ladies in the work. On Sept. 7 the first meeting was held with nine members present: Mrs. Peirce, Mrs. D. B. Shedd, Mrs. Robert W. Merrill, Mrs. Lyman E. Patten, Mrs. Annie McLaren, Miss Mary Atwater (afterward Mrs. C. B. Kelsey), Miss Louise Nelson, Miss Gertrude Baars, and Mrs. F. M. Davis. The decision at that first meeting was that it should be an informal club only, but it was later converted into a stronger organization, with Mrs. Peirce as president, Mrs. E. F. Uhl as vice-president, Mrs. F. M. Davis as secretary, and Mrs. D. B. Shedd as treasurer. At the suggestion of Mrs. George G. Briggs the club was named "St. Cecelia Society." During the first year the membership increased from the original nine to 100, and in 1887 the club became a real educational organization by admitting student members. In 1891 a lot on Ransom street north of Fulton street was purchased, and in 1893 the corner stone was laid for the commodious building which has ever since been the home of the society. From the beginning the organization has been prosperous, and it has been and is of inestimable service to those who are striving to learn something of "the only art of heaven given to earth, the only art of earth we take to heaven."

#### GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

Of the veteran soldier organizations the Grand Army of the Republic made its first appearance in Grand Rapids, June 28, 1869, when Custer Post No. 5 was chartered. On March 16, 1887, John A. Logan Post No. 1 was chartered and holds its meetings at the National Home, where it has a fine post room. Amasa B. Watson Post No. 395, was chartered in October, 1888, and it yet has a considerable membership. There are Women's Relief Corps connected with the Grand Rapids G. A. R. posts.

The Society of the Army of the Cumberland held its reunion here on Sept. 16 and 17, 1885, and on the same occasion were reunions of the Mexican war veterans, the Sons of Veterans, the old Third infantry, and the First Michigan Engineers and Mechanics. An address of welcome was made by Gov. Russell A. Alger, to which Gen. Philip H. Sheridan responded, and other orations were delivered by Gen. R. D. Mussey, Senator Thomas W. Palmer, and Hon. B. H. Cochran, of Toledo. On the same occasion the ceremony of unveiling the Sol-



diers' and Sailors' Monument, on the triangular park by the head of Monroe avenue, took place, at which the presentation address was made by the Hon. Thomas D. Gilbert, the acceptance by Gen. Byron R. Pierce, and the oration by the Hon. Charles W. Watkins, in behalf of the Grand Army of the Republic. The air was vocal with military music, there was a fine procession in the streets, and the exercises closed with a military banquet at Luce's hall. It was estimated that there were more than 30,000 visitors in the city.

Gen. Byron R. Pierce for a time was in command of the Third Michigan infantry, and at the battle of Gettysburg, his superiors being disabled, the command of the brigade devolved upon him. His heroic stand at the Peachtree is claimed to have saved the day and turned the tide of victory to the Union arms. General Pierce is still a resident of Grand Rapids, and at a very advanced age is hale and hearty, enjoying the respect and esteem of an extremely large circle of friends and admirers.

Commodore John L. Worden, the hero of the Monitor in its ever memorable battle with the Confederate iron-clad, the Merrimack, was a resident of Grand Rapids for a number of years. He is well remembered by our older citizens.

Grand Rapids had among her honored citizens two Mexican war veterans—Gen. A. T. McReynolds and Col. Daniel McConnell. Both were active in the Civil war operations, both at home and in the field, and are recalled to memory with due veneration.

#### SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Among the societies in the Valley City, Kent Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution enjoys an honorable distinction. It meets monthly at the homes of members, and on Jan. 11 of each year it holds its annual meeting, that date being the anniversary of Michigan's admission as a territory, in 1805. The society was organized, Jan. 15, 1897, as the result of a petition to the Michigan society for permission to form a local chapter, signed by eleven members who were residents of Grand Rapids. This petition being granted, a meeting was held on Dec. 2, 1897, at which time a constitution and by-laws was adopted and twenty-six became charter members. The name first decided upon was "Western Michigan Chapter," but on March 24, 1914, the old charter was surrendered and a new charter was granted, the name being changed to "Kent Chapter." On June 23, 1910, the society celebrated Founders' Day and with appropriate ceremony placed a bronze tablet on the National City Bank building as marking the site of the Guild home, the first frame building erected in Grand Rapids, in which was held the first township election and the first white wedding. Among the prominent members of this chapter are United States Senators John Patton, Jr. (deceased), and William Alden Smith, Maj.-Gen. Byron R. Pierce, of Civil war fame, and Brig.-Gen. Louis C. Covell, now serving with the United States forces in France.

A chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution has also been organized in Grand Rapids. It meets regularly at the homes of its members and considerable interest is manifested in the society. Mrs. L. Victor Sidell, Mrs. Huntley Russell, and Mrs. Lucius Boltwood are active members.



## ART—PAINTING

Grand Rapids is not without a goodly number of fine-art devotees, and among citizens of the Valley City there have always been some who were gifted in that line. Probably among the first was Charles F. Moore, who showed taste and talent in portraiture in the early fifties, and some of his amateur pieces were much admired. Mrs. Ezra T. Nelson quite early attracted attention as a delineator in water colors and in oil. Marinus Harting, who came from Holland to Grand Rapids in 1854, and resided here during the remainder of his life, was an artist of much genius. Landscape painting was the specialty in which he was drilled, but later in life he developed taste and aptitude for portrait work also. He opened a studio here and soon gathered a class of ambitious young students. Among these were Fred S. Church and Lawrence C. Earle, who have won much more than local distinction; Annette Henry, Sarah Nelson, Mary Cuming, Maria Winslow, and Mollie A. Kingsbury. Several of the larger landscape pieces painted by Harting are still preserved and highly valued by the owners.

Fred S. Church became a well known celebrity in New York and won a national reputation in the line of art illustrations, and Lawrence C. Earle, who still resides in Grand Rapids, has won enviable distinction in the line of game painting—flesh, fish and fowl. Among other local artists have been Mrs. L. H. Randall, Mrs. B. A. Harlan, Mrs. G. C. Fitch, Mary Luther Barclay, Mrs. Torrey, and Mrs. E. M. Coppens. William Howe, who took honors in Paris for fine animal pictures, was for a time, when he began his studies, a resident of Grand Rapids and a clerk in the dry goods trade. In 1888 he was awarded a medal at a Paris exposition. Peter E. Rudel, who also became noted in Parisian art circles, was at one time a worker at the plasterer's trade in Grand Rapids and was a self-taught artist. J. G. Fisher, also of Grand Rapids, and who won marked distinction in New York as a crayon sketch artist, began the exercise of his taste and development of his skill while employed as an engineer in this city.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Grand Rapids was originally a furniture center almost exclusively, and while it still leads the world as a furniture market, diversified industries have been developing very rapidly until today the city is no longer a one-industry town. The leading industry, as has been shown in a preceding chapter, is furniture, over sixty factories being engaged in making the world's best product in that line; the second largest industry is that of flour and grist mill products; the third, machinery, and the fourth, printing. The largest factory in the world making folding paper boxes is located in Grand Rapids; the largest carpet sweeper factory and refrigerator plants are here; the largest and second largest showcase factories in the world are located in Grand Rapids; the only factory in the world making belt lacing machines and metal belt lacers is located in Grand Rapids, as is also the only factory in the world making shoe button fastening machinery. The city is the largest producer in the world of gypsum products, many rich deposits being located right at the city's doors. The city



also ranks first in the production of sticky fly-paper, "Tanglefoot" being the trade-mark for a world-famous brand. The largest window sash pulley factory in the world is located at Grand Rapids, and the city is also the largest producer of dry kilns and veneers. The largest factories in the world making excelsior and asphalt shingles are also located in Grand Rapids. In addition to the above, the largest factory in the United States making opera chairs, school seats and church pews is located in Grand Rapids; also the largest manufacturers of manual training equipment in this country make Grand Rapids their home. One of the largest and best band instrument factories in the world is located in Grand Rapids. The city also produces large quantities of knit goods and brass findings, there being several large plants turning out these products.

Samuel F. Perkins, a settler of 1836, at an early day opened a tannery on the east bank of the river, a short distance above Michigan street. This was the pioneer plant in an industry that has always been prominent in Grand Rapids, at least six being in operation at the present time.

The city has developed industrially faster than the country at large. Its manufactured products are shipped to all civilized countries of the earth, giving the city an international reputation. The value of its manufactured products is upwards of \$50,000,000 annually.

#### PICRIC ACID PLANT

As a direct result of the great world war Grand Rapids has become the location of an immense governmental industry. A huge plant, occupying in the neighborhood of 1,400 acres of ground and employing 2,000 or more men, is in course of construction as this volume is being printed. It means that Grand Rapids has entered upon war work on a large scale and that the population of the city and its environs will be increased by thousands. The construction plans call for the employment of some 11,000 men upon the erection of the buildings. The site is in Wyoming township, three miles south of the city, and lies along Back creek, west of the Grand Rapids & Indiana railway and the Kalamazoo interurban. The plant will cost between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000, and will consist of an administration building, several factory buildings of immense proportions, a building for the quarter-master, quarters for a company of Federal guard troops, a water supply system, and a complete industrial railroad system with connections. The buildings, it is said, will cover approximately fifty acres, and the construction will be fireproof throughout. The plant is being constructed and will be owned by the government, and after completion will be devoted to the manufacture of picric acid, with a capacity of 5,000,000 pounds per month.

As to the permanency of the institution the government gives no pledges or promises beyond the duration of the war. The investment will be so large, however, and the buildings so well fitted for manufacturing purposes that no apprehension is felt that permanent use will not be found for it. And besides there are rumors, seemingly well founded, that the government contemplates the establishment here of a complete aeroplane plant. Aeroplane parts have been manu-



factured here for the past year, and it is rumored that there will soon be established a plant for the assembling and completion of aeroplanes, with a large flying field. In fact it is asserted that options have already been secured upon a large tract of land for this purpose.

### ADDITION TO PARK SYSTEM

On another page of this volume is given an extended description of the park system of Grand Rapids. An important addition has been made to it by the recent transfer to the city of the magnificent park lands known as the "Hodenpyl Woods," located in the vicinity of Reed's Lake. With this addition the park system of the city is greatly extended, and the transfer has been made through the generosity of Anton G. Hodenpyl, formerly of Grand Rapids, but now a resident of New York city, where he is one of the leaders in financial affairs. Mr. Hodenpyl achieved his early success in Grand Rapids, where he became prominently connected with the Michigan Trust Company and other leading financial and industrial institutions, and since taking up his residence in America's metropolis it is a pleasure to know that he has maintained an affection for the city of his earlier successes. The transfer of the "Hodenpyl Woods" that it may become a part of Grand Rapids' magnificent park system is an evidence of that affection.

### A FEW IMPORTANT FACTS

Grand Rapids is the sixth healthiest large city in the United States and the healthiest east of the Mississippi river.

Grand Rapids leads the world in infant welfare work.

Grand Rapids is the largest city in the United States to vote itself dry and is the largest city without a burlesque theatre.

No bank has ever failed in Grand Rapids.

The assessed valuation of the city is over \$172,000,000.

The bank clearings in 1916 were \$227,000,000.

There are nine National and State banks, two private banks and two large trust companies in Grand Rapids.

There are five building and loan associations operating in Grand Rapids, and these associations have about 9,000 members.

Fifteen million dollars has been spent in Grand Rapids in the past four years in the construction of new buildings.

### VILLAGES AND HAMLETS

While the city of Grand Rapids, because of its importance as a commercial and manufacturing center, is rightly given precedence when Kent county is mentioned, yet it should not be overlooked that the pre-eminence of the Valley City is due in no small measure to the fertile fields of the surrounding country and the progressive citizens found throughout the county. In the different political divisions of the county thriving villages have sprung up, in which are carried on industries that, were they not brought into comparison with the larger ones of the city, would more positively impress one with their importance. These villages are flourishing marts of trade, supported by the farming population in their respective communities, and the rela-



tions thus existing makes a community of interest, the realization of which contributes to the prosperity of all. Among these villages may be named Caledonia, Cannonsburg, Cascade, Cedar Springs, Comstock, Grandville, Kent City, Rockford, Sand Lake, Sparta, Lowell, and a number of others, all of which are given appropriate mention on other pages of this volume, and the history of which practically begin with the history of their respective townships. Among the villages which more recently have risen to places of some importance may be mentioned Alto, Byron Center, Dutton, Evans, Reed's Station, and Ross Station.

Alto is situated in an excellent farming section on the line between Bowne and Lowell townships. It is a station on the Perre Marquette railroad, with telegraph and express offices. Its industries are represented by a creamery, grain elevator, lumber yard, drug store, two implement and vehicle establishments, livery stable, bank, garage, clothing and shoes, variety store, produce, hotel, meat market, blacksmith shop, furniture store and a furniture and undertaking establishment. It is also an excellent livestock market. Population, about 400.

Byron Center is located, as its name indicates, at the center of Byron township, and it enjoys the advantages gained from that excellent agricultural district. It is a station on the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern railroad and has a population of about 300. It has a blacksmith shop and wagon-making establishment, hotel, implement store, creamery, grain and fuel store, several general stores, a bank, meat market, garage, harness shop, tin shop and a drug store.

Dutton is the chief trading center in Gaines township. It is a station on the Michigan Central railroad, has a population of about 150, and its activities are represented by an elevator, implement store, two general stores, a blacksmith shop and a wagon shop.

Evans is located in the northeast corner of Courtland township on the Grand Trunk railroad. It has a small population, two general stores, and coal, cement, and produce dealers.

Reed's Station is another hamlet that the construction of the Grand Trunk railroad through the northern part of the country brought into existence. It is situated in Algoma township and has a general store.

Ross Station is on the Grand Rapids & Indiana railroad in Byron township and is the location of a wholesale and retail celery establishment. There is also a general store in the hamlet.

















